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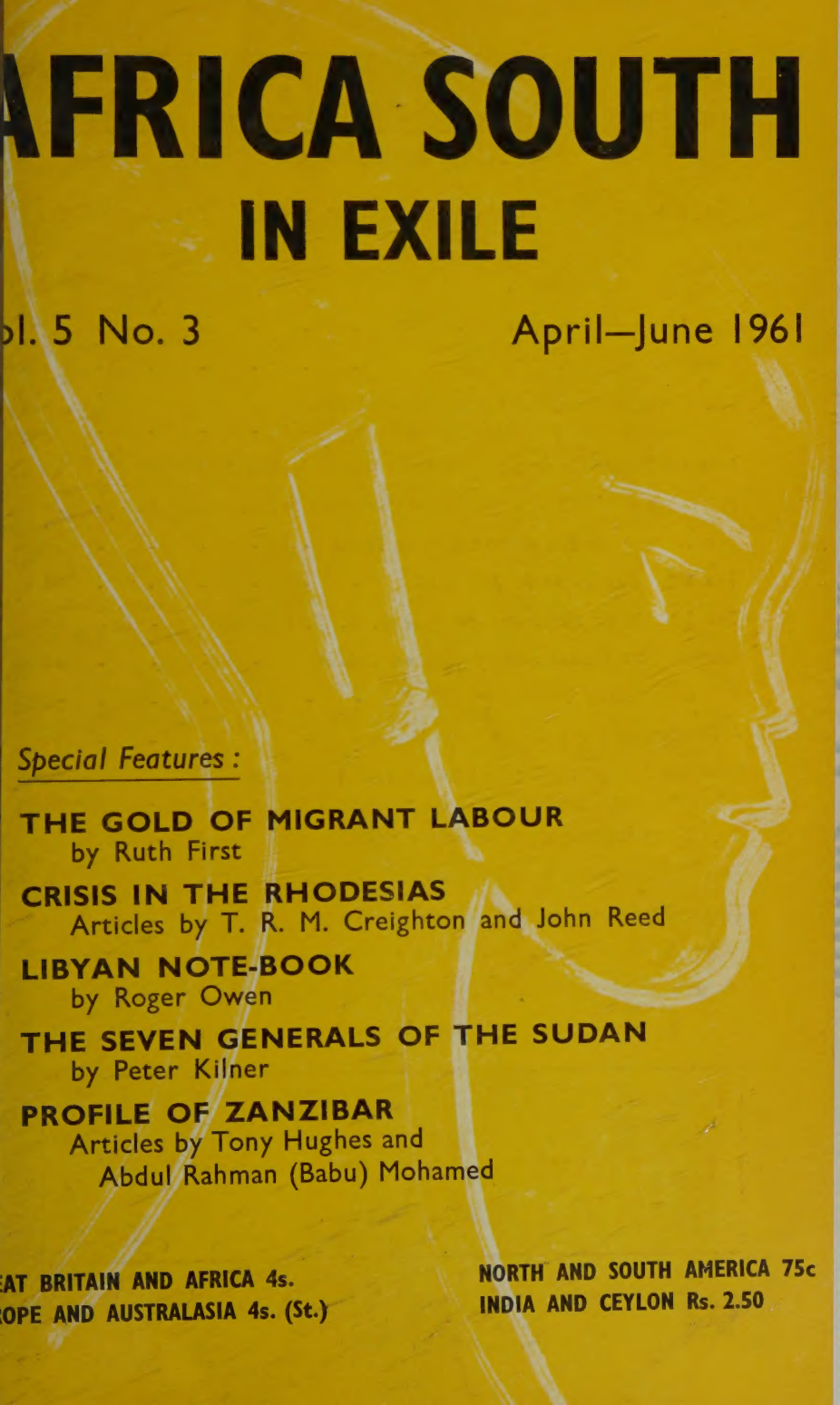

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CASE HISTORY IN SUICIDE

PATRICE LUMUMBA, Prime Minister of the Congo, is dead. And nothing that the suddenly pained voices of Western capitals may say is likely to persuade Africa that the West was not ultimately responsible.

Elisabethville is as independent as Brussels permits it to be. If Tshombe governs at all, he does so because there are enough Belgian soldiers to promote his authority and enough Belgian technicians to sustain his administration. Either service could be suspended by a brisk order from Brussels, recalling all soldiers and threatening technicians who serve the still illegal Katanga government with loss of Belgian citizenship if they continue. A freezing of all tax revenue by the Belgian mining companies would soon enough make recruiting in other countries unrewarding.

It is conceivable that the Belgian government was not a covert accomplice to the killing of Lumumba. That it connived at the killing cannot, however, seriously be doubted. It must have known that the killing of Lumumba was a manifest possibility. The proper instruction to the Tshombe regime, had it been parcelled up in the proper threats, would have prevented even an accident. Instead, the Belgian government has shown itself blatant as well as vicious. It did not care if Lumumba was killed and it did not care who knew this. It is true that the vicious often get away with a great deal in the blinding blizzards of the Cold War. Those who are blatant as well shut off their own passages of escape.

Certainly if Belgium must bear much of the responsibility for Lumumba's murder, the whole West is bound to share in the retribution. There are few in Lagos or Dar es Salaam, let alone Casablanca or Conakry, who will not believe that the West—and the United States in particular—could have compelled Belgium to ensure the release of Lumumba or at least the protection of his life. Washington has used the whip before; and then even Britain and France were forced to retreat. Nor is the killing of Lumumba likely to be seen in Africa as an isolated act, but as the culminating crime in a campaign of colonial banditry that began with the nominal independence of the Congo on July 1, 1960. The tragedy is that when, from some plateau of the future, the campaign is surveyed, not the least significant of the casualties will be the United Nations Organisation itself.

From the time, less than two weeks after independence, that the Belgian government dispatched troops to the Congo—with the stated objective of protecting the lives of Belgian settlers—and the provincial administration of Katanga announced its secession from the republic, the independence and integrity of the Congo became an international responsibility. At the request of the Congo's central government, headed by Kasavubu as President and Lumumba as Prime Minister, the Security Council demanded the withdrawal of Belgian troops as speedily as possible and placed a United Nations force at the disposal of the central government to assist it in maintaining law and order.

It should have been clear to the Security Council then, and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, that the Congo could enjoy neither law and order nor the thinnest semblance of self-determination while the richest of its six provinces was being ruled as a separate state by the Belgian mining houses with the assistance of Belgian troops.

It was from the abject failure of the United Nations to compel the withdrawal of all Belgian forces from Katanga and so clear the Congo of open colonial intervention that the subsequent crisis inevitably spouted. What law and order was the United Nations Command called in to help the central government maintain, if it was not the law and order of the central government? And how could such law and order be acquired, let alone preserved, while foreign intervention continued unrestrained?

Lumumba threatened to invite the assistance of the Soviet Union if the United Nations did not expel the Belgian presence from the Congo. When he at last requested the United Nations Command to withdraw, since it was clearly unwilling or unable to perform the function for which it had been invited to enter the Congo in the first place, and he turned to the Soviet Union instead, he was denounced throughout the West as a Communist and a paranoiac. Kasavubu dismissed him from office—illegally, since the dismissal was invalidated by the Congo Parliament—and finally succeeded in placing him under arrest, to surrender him to captivity and killing in Katanga.

* * * *

On September 28, 1958, the 'overseas territories' of France were permitted to vote in a special referendum between limited autonomy within the French Community and complete independence. Guinea, alone of all the French African territories,

chose independence; and Guinea found itself at once under political and economic siege. By the first week in November only 12 remained of the 4,000 French technicians, doctors, judges, teachers and administrators who had been in the territory five weeks before. Even those who wished to stay were forced to leave under threat from the French government that they would lose their pension provisions. France cancelled all aid, halted all trade between the two countries, and even withdrew capital equipment from the territory. Guinea faced complete economic and political collapse.

Rebuffed by the United States, which fought shy of offending France, Sékou Touré was given loans by Ghana and the Soviet Union, while the first six countries to sign trade agreements with the new state were—in that order—East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, the Soviet Union, Hungary and Bulgaria. Czechoslovakia sent arms, medical and agricultural equipment to replace what France had removed, and together with Hungary and Poland signed agreements to construct factories and mills on long-term credit. It did not take long before Guinea was widely regarded throughout the West—despite Sékou Touré's long record of intellectual independence—as a Communist satellite. It is still being attacked as a mere manipulation of Moscow, though its government has shown itself to be resolutely neutralist, opposed to the colonialism of East and West alike. Significantly, it was Sékou Touré, alone of the African leaders advising Lumumba, who from the outset supported Lumumba in his appeal to the Soviet Union.

* * * *

Perhaps Lumumba was not the best Prime Minister the Congo could have had, though those who maintain this are slow to propose a better alternative. Whether he was or not, however, is supremely irrelevant. He was the legally elected Prime Minister of the Congo and leader of the country's democratically chosen strongest parliamentary party. Until the Parliament of the Congo displaced him—and this it unequivocally refused to do—he was the only figure in the Congo whom the United Nations had the right to regard as representing the majority will of the Congolese people. He was, after all, the authority for a United Nations presence in the Congo at all. Is it so reprehensible that, as Prime Minister, he wanted to govern a truly independent country? Is it conceivable that he was right in believing it the

duty of the United Nations to assist him in accomplishing this end? If he did not choose the wisest way of attempting to gain true independence for his country, can the West reasonably claim that it left him with any other choice?

There can be little satisfaction for those faithful to the principle and practice of democracy in attacking the United Nations for its conduct in the Congo. Yet it would surely be perverse for those who value the future of international democracy to do anything else. On February 15, 1961, the Prime Minister of India, addressing the Parliament at Delhi, announced that India would send combat troops to the Congo in response to a United Nations request "*only when it is convinced that they would be rightly employed for the freedom of the people and not in support of the gangster regime now ruling there*". A more corrosive commentary on the record of the United Nations Command in the Congo could hardly be implied.

The United Nations had no right to enter the Congo at the invitation of the central government in order to ensure the complete withdrawal of Belgian forces, and then stay without performing the function for which it was invited. It had no right to pay the troops of the central government directly instead of providing the central government with the funds to pay its own troops itself. It had no right whatsoever to close down the airport and radio station at Leopoldville to the Prime Minister and the President of the Congo, especially since it was aware—as how could it not be?—that the President had unrestricted access to the airport and radio station at Brazzaville, a short stretch of river away. It had no right to intervene at all in the struggle for power taking place within the central government between President and Prime Minister, backing Kasavubu with funds and then with the recognition of a seat for his delegation in the General Assembly while Lumumba was under arrest and members of the Congolese Parliament forcibly prevented from meeting by Kasavubu-controlled troops. It had no right to provide Mobutu with assistance of any sort, since he had no legal authority whatsoever. If the United Nations ceased to recognise the authority of the central government in the persons of its Prime Minister and Parliament, it ceased to recognise simultaneously the authority for its own presence in the Congo. The Secretary-General sponsored the resolution for the recalling of the Congo Parliament, by force if necessary. Had he done so before, might not Lumumba still be alive, and much of the Congo agony have been avoided?

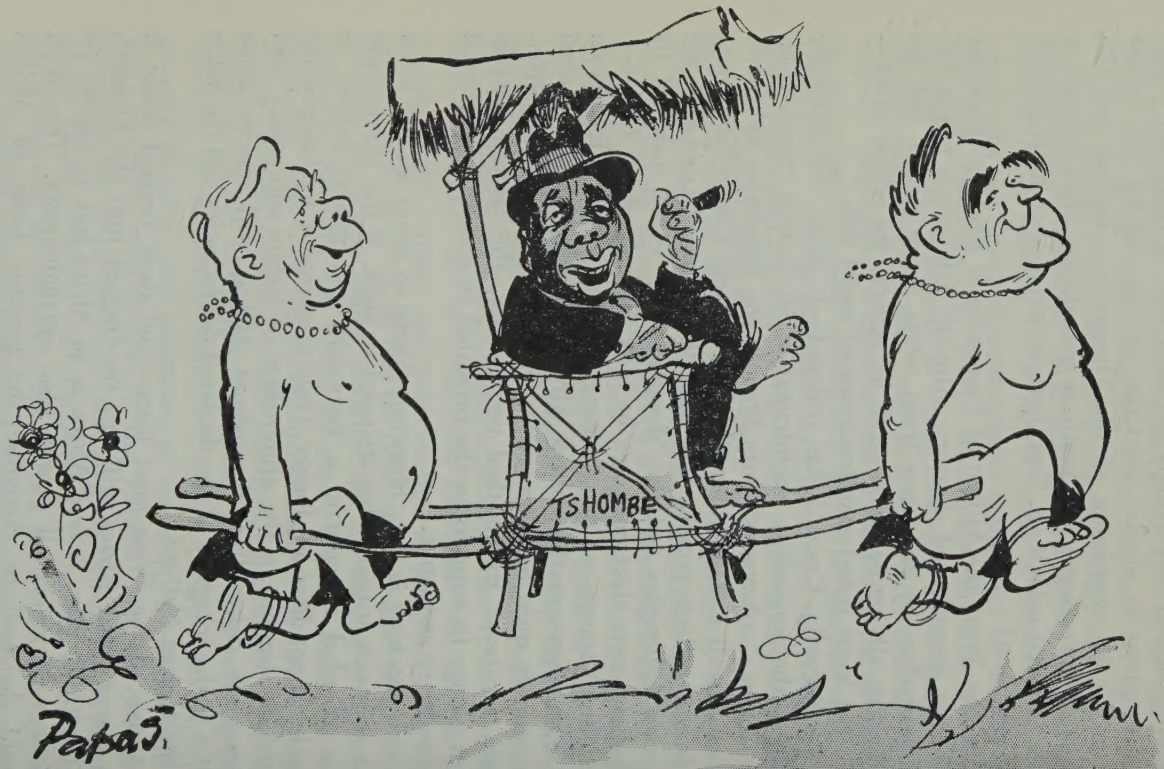
The West will pay dearly for the way in which, with its 'automatic majority', it compelled the United Nations to a course of action increasingly partisan. Nor is there any repair in attempting to silence criticism by denouncing the Soviet Union for its repression of the Hungarian rebellion and the killing of Imre Nagy. The kettle is nonetheless black because it is the pot that calls it so. Can there be any real comfort in such a comparison?

For the West the killing of Lumumba is likely to turn out to be an unmitigated disaster. Already Tshombe's forces are being swollen by assistance from white South Africa and the Rhodesias, allying Belgium—and, for Africa, the whole West—with the most hated manifestations of racial rule.

The Security Council has ordered—it must unhesitatingly ensure—the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops from the Congo, 'volunteers' from France, the Rhodesias and South Africa as well as Belgian forces. If the present Congo Parliament no longer reflects popular will since the killing of Lumumba and his two colleagues and the 'disappearance' of so many of its members, new elections must be held throughout the Congo—including Katanga—under the supervision of a committee drawn up from representatives of the Afro-Asian states. A new central government must be democratically chosen, and to that government, whatever its political complexion, the United Nations must pledge its support in the provision of economic, technical and military assistance.

Such patching is not, however, likely to cover all the holes that so much stupidity has stripped to sight. If the West could have afforded to contain a Verwoerd and Salazar before, it clearly cannot do so any longer. Only an energetic and imaginative initiative, leading to the elimination of 'white supremacy' and Portuguese colonialism throughout Africa, will restore some belief in the integrity of the declared democracies and the value of the United Nations.

Above all the West must learn—and show beyond doubt it has learnt—that Africa will not be dragged into the blizzards of the Cold War. A free Africa is an Africa free to choose its alliances or reject all power bloc entanglements. The West would do well to recognise the genuine force of African neutralism. If it does not do so soon, it will succeed only in providing a case history in political suicide.



"Yessir, baas, I believes in independence, too."

THE GOLD OF MIGRANT LABOUR

RUTH FIRST

Editor of 'Fighting Talk' and Johannesburg Editor of 'New Age'
One of the 91 still standing trial for High Treason.

THE days when each country in Africa was an island are over, and few know this better than South Africa's vast and wealthy gold mining industry.

Migrant labour for the Union's mines—long the fly-wheel of Union 'Native policy'—is today being drawn not only from the Union, but from nine countries in Southern and Central Africa, reaching as far north as Tanganyika.

The Witwatersrand has become the capital of an economic empire which is influenced by events and policy not only in Cape Town, Pretoria and Windhoek, but also in Maseru and Lobatsi, Luanda and Lisbon, Salisbury, Blantyre and Lusaka.

Of a labour force of 432,234 African workers *recruited* in 1959 by the Chamber of Mines, only 182,561 came from the Union. 58 per cent. (a total of 249,673 men) came from territories over which the Union has no direct political control.

Of the Africans *employed* during 1959 only 35.2 per cent., or roughly one in three, came from the Union; and 64.8 per cent. of the African labour force came from other countries in Africa.

In 1958, 19 per cent., or *one man in five* working on the gold mines, came from Africa's tropical areas (Angola, Northern Bechuanaland, Nyasaland, Tanganyika); and it is of key significance that the proportion of miners drawn from the heart of Central Africa has risen sharply year by year.

In 1941, the first year that the annual reports of the Chamber of Mines list 'TROPICAL AREAS' as a separate source of labour, only 26,067 workers came from these areas. By 1959 the figure was near 70,000, and it probably rose another 10,000 in 1960. By agreement between the Chamber of Mines and the Nyasaland Government, from Nyasaland alone there was a target of 20,000 to be recruited for the mines last year.

The preoccupation of South African politicians with the white man's 'civilising mission' in Africa is thus really the need for a common 'Native policy' as far north as possible, and arises from the ever closer identity of interest in matters of labour supply and control between the Union, Portuguese

colonies in Africa, and the Central African Federation. The future of Federation; an African majority in the Nyasaland Legislative Council; Nyerere leadership of a Tanganyika approaching self-rule: these are all matters of vital interest to the mining houses dominating Hollard Street and the lower ends of Commissioner and Main Streets in Johannesburg.

Ominous indeed to the mining empire are the giant strides towards independence and African self-rule being taken by East and Central African countries; and the powerful moves towards Pan-African unity and solidarity with the non-white people of South Africa. For the mines are about to see gains, earnestly striven for since the end of World War II, snatched from their grasp by events in Africa during the next handful of years.

Even before the Boer War at the turn of the century, the mines tried to extend their labour recruiting areas to West Africa, to India, Italy and Armenia, even to the West Indies, and the chronic labour shortage of this period resulted in the ill-fated scheme for the importation of Chinese labour.

Successive governments and commissions grappled with the ever-present shortage of cheap labour. A 1929 Inter-Departmental report said there was "insufficient native labour in the Union", and the 1931 Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (W.N.L.A.) report hoped that the government would "move in permitting native labour for the mines to be drawn from fields further afield than the present limit".

In 1951 the mines estimated they were short of 70,000 workers, and in 1953 were 15 per cent. below their labour capacity. The shortage began almost immediately after the Second World War, but was aggravated by the development of the new Free State mines, the fillip given to existing mines by uranium development and the expansion of secondary industry in the Union.

As recently as 1953 the Chairman of Anglo-American, the late Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, issued a warning for the future of the producing mines if the African labour shortage was not overcome.

Only during the middle 'fifties has the labour supply at last been found to be adequate. In 1955 the Colonial Secretary of Mauritius enquired whether W.N.L.A. was still interested in a supply of Native labour from the island. That official was advised that "as the Native labour position of the mines had changed, no further action was intended by the Association for the time being".

It was with the establishment—its headquarters in Salisbury—of the Tropical Areas Administration of the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association, the labour organisation of the Chamber of Mines, that the picture started to change.

Over the last 21 years the mines have been on an extensive, and, on the whole, unpublicised, venture into the interior of Southern and Central Africa. Africa has been opened up anew by 200 labour engagement stations. Top security labour treaties with other States have been concluded. International Labour Organisation Covenants on migratory and forced labour have been carefully studied and recruiting practices adapted to skirt round international labour control provisions.

By 1952 the General Manager of the W.N.L.A. Tropical Areas Administration could write that there was an ever-growing reservoir of African labour for the mines and that:

> "the total population of the countries north of latitude 22 degrees south, excluding territories north of Angola and Tanganyika, is now more than 20 million, *of whom about one-fifth are male adults physically fit for work.*"[1]

An inviting picture—for the labour recruiter—of the new Africa; but even in this article on the triumphant outcome of the scramble for labour in Africa, the note of panic sounds:

> "As the Natives become more conscious of the advantages of wage-earning there must be far more than enough surplus labour to supply the needs of the gold mines, provided—*and this is an essential provision* (my italics)—that no government or administrative restrictions are placed on the free choice by the Native of the employment he desires, in other words, provided he be allowed the elementary right of selling his labour in the best market available to him".

For, even as the labour appetite of the mines at last seems sated, three continent-wide pressures are starting to undo the years of careful negotiation and planning by the labour recruiting organisations of the Chamber of Mines. Colonial governments are giving place to African governments by no means willing to inherit the labour agreements concluded with other countries and agencies under the old order. African independence must at last get to grips with the problem of poverty and economic under-development; and, inevitably, the system of migrant labour must come under fire. Thirdly, the continent-wide

[1] W. Gemmill on "The Growing Reservoir of Native Labour for the Mines" in 'OPTIMA', publication of Anglo-American Corporation.

antagonism to South Africa's apartheid rule is speeding up the boycott movement against the Union, and already items on the boycott list in East and Central Africa will include not only canned goods and mining equipment, hoes, sherries and shark fins, but African labour.

Johannesburg's Hollard Street Stock Exchange could not have liked the sound of the 1st All-African Peoples Conference resolution which, in December 1958, called on the Rhodesias and Nyasaland to withhold their labour from the South African mines and to divert such labour to the development of their own countries, both as part of the economic boycott of South Africa and as an essential measure to put a stop to the disruption of family life in Central Africa. If the mines hoped that the resolution would remain pious, they must have reacted sharply to the Tanganyika government announcement in October 1960 that it would end the agreement signed in 1959 by the British colonial government and W.N.L.A., under which government facilities are used for the recruitment of African labour for the South African mines. The agreement ended this March, just when the Tanganyika labour quota was due to reach the record figure of 12,000.

For too long in South Africa, 'Native policy' has been based on the maxim that what is good for the gold mines must be good for South Africa. The Chamber of Mines will have a great deal more difficulty in trying to persuade the continent of the 1960's that what is good for the Union's thriving gold mines must be good for Africa as a whole.

The glossy publications that specialise in idyllic pictures of the mining industry boast that employment on the Witwatersrand gold mines is "one of the greatest civilising factors" in the whole field of African labour. The gold mines have established themselves as a magnet that attracts for employment Africans from Central Africa "because the system of migratory labour is particularly suitable for them". Here they learn the habits of regular work, of cleanliness, first aid and hygiene—to glean a few phrases from the Chamber of Mines glossies. Here "mining employment cushions the impact of Western industrial society upon the tribesmen brought into contact with the white man's way of life".[2]

The mines have always possessed the marvellous facility for

[2]GOLD—Chamber of Mines P.R.D. Services No. 66.

believing that their own self-interest coincides with the general good. For 74 years they have posed as South Africa's fairy godmothers. Men were to be recruited for the mines so that the 'civilising habit of labour' could be inculcated in them. (Profits were a factor too, of course, but not advertised as such in public.)

It has been said that the wealth of the Reef gold mines lies not in the richness of the strike but in the lost costs of production, kept down by the abundance of cheap labour. The Transvaal mines have been the world's richest source of gold (61.9 per cent. of the world's supply); but to make the mines pay, enormous quantities of ore have had to be processed. There have been few limits to the amount of gold mined from even low grade ore, as long as a continuous stream of cheap labour could be kept flowing. So, from the start, the mines have had to find not only abundant supplies of labour, but labour that was cheap. These two rather incompatible aims were achieved in two main ways. The first was to use only contracted migrant labour at cut-throat wages, on the assumption that African mineworkers—brought from their rural homes to the Reef for stipulated contract periods—were really peasants, able to subsidize mine wages from the land. The second was to achieve a labour recruiting monopoly and to reduce costs of wages, food and quarters by setting up a highly centralised system for controlling wages. These methods have been preserved intact to this day.

In 1889, only three years after the discovery of uniform banket deposits with cheap coal nearby, the Witwatersrand—later the Transvaal—Chamber of Mines was formed. By 1896 the Chamber had got the mines to conclude an agreement on minimum and maximum pay, hours and rations, and to secure labour recruiting privileges in Portuguese East Africa. A Native Labour Supply Association was early at work trying to recruit and propagandise the mines among the Chiefs. The labour supply rose from 14,000 in 1866 to 97,800 in 1899, workers coming from the Union, but large numbers also from Portuguese East Africa. Yet the demand for labour was never satisfied, due chiefly to the bad conditions, wage reductions (from 1890 to 1898), and recruiting abuses. The 1890's saw attempts to induce Transvaal Africans to work for wages—increased taxes, among them a special labour tax, laws against squatting, and persistent approaches by the Chamber of Mines to the Transvaal Volksraad for the tightening up of the pass laws.

The Boer War in 1899 brought a stop to most Reef mining, and 96,000 Africans on the mines dispersed to their homes. From 1901 mining slowly restarted; but labour returned very slowly, and by 1904 only some 70,000 men were back at work. The Transvaal Labour Commission estimated the labour shortage at over 300,000 and concluded that not only South Africa but even *Africa* did not contain enough labour!

Except for those from the Transvaal, Union Africans were comparative late-comers to the mines, and only after Union in 1910 was an African labour force on any appreciable scale recruited from the Cape, the Free State and Natal. Year by year, as land congestion in the Reserves got worse and soil deteriorated, Africans were forced to go into 'white' labour areas to make up the deficit between their needs and crop production.

Throughout the years of the greatest labour shortage the mines continued to take steps to get labour as quickly and cheaply as possible, but without altering their system. Vast dividends were being paid in those early years, in some cases at 100 per cent.; but though the W.N.L.A. came under fire from some quarters for its recruiting abuses, its labour monopoly, its wage policy and compound conditions, rather than put its own house in order and raise wages to attract a more established force, it started even then to cast its eyes beyond the Union's borders, convinced—like Rhodes—that its labour hinterland lay northwards.

Despite Lord Milner's efforts, the British government refused the W.N.L.A. permission to recruit in Kenya and Uganda. An experiment in 1903—to bring 1,000 Nyasas to the Reef after a drought—failed. Some Damara labour was brought in from German South West Africa. It was even suggested that American or West Indian labour be imported; but when it was pointed out that the former would demand better conditions and might even "play some political part in holding that the Blacks are the equal of the Whites"[3], this plan was hastily dropped. Feelers were thrown out to Madagascar, Somaliland and the Congo, but no labour was forthcoming. The years 1904 to 1910 were those of the Chinese experiment that misfired.

Only Portuguese East Africa saved these early years for the mines. The earliest W.N.L.A. records show that in January

[3]John Reeves: 'Chinese Labour in South Africa 1901-1910'—Thesis.

1903, 88.9 per cent. of the African miners were East Coasters. By 1922 the East Coasters had dropped to 40 per cent., and by 1958 to 26 per cent. of the labour force; but—though the percentage of East Coasters has dropped as the mines have found other steady sources of labour—year after year since the last century the Portuguese recruits have flowed underground to reap the gold of the Reef.

A close brotherhood between the Union and Mozambique governments has been sealed by generations of migrant labour, who have supplied the backbone of the mining industry. Early Chamber attempts to centralise recruiting of workers and obtain a labour monopoly were not as successful in the Union as over the border in Mozambique where—Professor Duffy records in his '*Portuguese Africa*'—"according to the report of the Rand Native Labour Association, the services of every Labour Agent in Portuguese territory whose opposition was of any moment was secured at a cost which did not materially affect the price of natives landed in these fields". From 1904 the mines drew anything from 60,000 to 115,000 Africans from Mozambique annually, with the peak being reached in 1928-9.

1928 was the year of the Mozambique Convention which followed on the pre- and post-Boer War labour arrangements and the 1909 Convention between the Transvaal Republican and Portuguese East Africa governments. The 1928 Convention has been revised and ratified in 1934, 1936, 1940 and 1952. It records the sordid deal between the two governments of the Union and Mozambique by which—in exchange for the sole right of the Chamber of Mines to recruit an annual contingent of contract workers—the South African government guarantees that 47.5 per cent. of seaborne import traffic to the Reef will go through Lourenço Marques harbour.

Part One of the Convention fixes the maximum number of Mozambique Africans to be recruited, and the guaranteed minimum. It lays down recruiting and working conditions, provides for the payment to the Portuguese government of registration, engagement and monthly fees for each recruit, and regularises the deferred pay system and the compulsory repatriation of recruits at the end of their contract periods.

Part Two of the Convention deals with railway traffic and rates, and Part Three with customs matters.

In 1940, in an extention of this barter of humans for port traffic, the South African government agreed to export 340,000

cases of citrus each year through Lourenço Marques, while the maximum number of recruits was raised from 90,000 to 100,000. The present maximum quota is still 100,000 recruits.

From Portuguese East Africa the mines get a contingent of labour that could not be bettered for regularity, that can be shunted to the worst and most unpopular mines, that remains on the mines for longer contract periods than any other group of workers. In return, Lourenço Marques has found a place on the map as an important port. Mozambique itself gets steady revenue from contract, passport and recruiting fees (44s. p.a. for each African recruited); operates tax collecting posts on the mines; and has benefitted from wages earned on the mines but spent as deferred pay in the territory.

The East Coaster signs on for a minimum work period of 12 months or 313 shifts. At the end of this contract, he may renew it for a further six months. After that he must be repatriated, but may sign on again as a recruit after six months have elapsed. On the average the East Coaster signs on for five to six contracts. After 10 or 12 years his working life as a miner is over.

The Chamber of Mines and the Union government deny with horror any suggestion that there is compulsion in labour recruiting for the mines. Workers are not recruits, but volunteers, they insist.

Marvin Harris[4] describes how, caught in the vice of the Mozambique labour code which permits no African to be 'idle', the African escapes to the mine recruiter in order to evade conscription as a *shibalo* or forced worker. When the hunt for *shibalos* is on in a particular district, the W.N.L.A. recruiting post is deluged by Africans anxious to sign on for the mines.

It is said that the days are now over when labour agents beat the bush for recruits, and chiefs were coerced or bribed to deliver a quota of young men to the mines. Lord Hailey, however, quoted by the 1953 International Labour Organisation Report on Forced Labour, says cautiously:

> "Though of course the Union cannot be held directly responsible for the fact, it is generally believed that recruitment in Portuguese areas has involved some element of compulsion, though its exact degree is not easy to determine."

The Portuguese Authorities net the fish, while the mines just take delivery.

[4]Marvin Harris: 'A First Hand report on Labour and Education in Mozambique', published by the American Committee on Africa.

Apart from the annual labour quota from southern Mozambique, more and more Africans from the north of the territory, or Portuguese Niassa, have been coming to work on the mines since the opening of the rich Free State gold fields. Mozambique between latitude 22° south and the Zambesi River is outside the recruiting sphere of the W.N.L.A., and officially the Portuguese Authorities do not encourage a labour exodus from this area. Yet it is estimated that 12,000 men make their way to the mines from Portuguese Niassa each year. If the W.N.L.A. has no offices in this territory, other recruiting organisations manifestly have. Or the recruit crosses over the border into Nyasaland and signs on at an engagement station there.

A Portuguese worker not signed on by the W.N.L.A. under the Mozambique Convention is a prohibited immigrant in the Union and liable to criminal prosecution and deportation. But once he travels south—whether he makes his own way, or his transport is arranged by a labour recruiting organisation—he will be issued with a Portuguese passport at the Ressano Garcia depot of the W.N.L.A., and will fall under the authority of the Portuguese Labour Curator stationed in the Union.

The Protectorates

Whatever their formal constitutional status—and in recent years Basutoland in particular has been striding towards independence—the three British Protectorates in Southern Africa, by virtue of their heavy labour exports each year, remain in large measure economic dependencies of the Union.

The 1953 Report on Basutoland, issued by the Commonwealth Relations Office, confesses that:

> "apart from employment in the government service, or at trading stores, printing works of the Paris Evangelical Mission and Roman Catholic Church, there is little work to be found in the territory. It is therefore necessary for the Basuto to leave the territory to work in the Union of South Africa".

It is estimated that about 43 per cent. of the adult male population is temporarily absent from Basutoland at any one time. This is labour not only on the gold mines, but recruited for work on coal, diamond and manganese mines and on farms. Recruited Basuto mine labour has jumped from the figure of 55,066 in 1957 to 65,249 in 1958 and 71,694 in 1959. (The Native Recruiting Corporation of the Chamber of Mines has head offices in Maseru and branch offices throughout the territory

which have labour contracts attested by government officials. The Agent of the High Commission Territories who deals with Protectorate labour now has offices in the new Free State goldfields.)

In deferred pay and remittances, the labour agencies paid out £685,000 in Basutoland during 1958. In the same year the recruiting agencies paid £60,000 to the government for tax due by recruits and recoverable from them in instalments, as well as some £20,000 in attestation fees.

From Bechuanaland the Native Recruiting Corporation and the W.N.L.A. recruited 19,306 men to work on the mines in 1959. In 1948 the figure was only 9,821. On departure from Bechuanaland, the labourer is debited by the recruiting agency with a sum of £2 for Native Tax and £1 a year for Graded Tax. The total of £3 is paid to the government forthwith and recovered later in instalments from the labourer's earnings. In this way the government is assured of an annual tax revenue from mine labour of some £55,000.

Swaziland is the smallest but also the wealthiest of the three Protectorates. This country's peak figure for mine labour was 9,175 in 1959.

Like the recruits from Mozambique, Protectorate labour has been flowing steadily into the mines for most of this century. Together these three Protectorates, on which successive South African governments have cast such greedy eyes, provide one in five of the men who dig out South Africa's gold.

South West Africa

In 1943 the W.N.L.A. had discussions with the South West African authorities "for the engagement of surplus natives in S.W.A." Two years later an agreement had been signed for the recruitment of men, labour rest camps had been built at Runtu and Mohembo, and a new road cut from Grootfontein to the Bechuanaland border. By 1947 the annual S.W.A. recruiting quota had been fixed at 3,000, and no more recent figures are available. The W.N.L.A. does not publish separate figures for S.W.A. labour recruited (here following in the footsteps of the Union government, which has illegally annexed South West into the Union, treating it as a fifth province.) Today's figure is no doubt higher than the 1947 quota; while, in addition, Africans from the north are making their way through the Okavango Native Territory and are being recruited at Mohembo in Bechuanaland.

During the 1960 South African parliamentary session, the Minister of Mines was asked how many Africans from S.W.A. were employed on the gold mines. He blandly replied: "No organised recruiting is being undertaken in South West Africa, and the information is therefore not available". Even the reports of the W.N.L.A., scanty and secretive as they are, do not bear out this statement.

Tropical Africa

The careful statistics of the gold mining industry conceal as much as they tell. The W.N.L.A.'s 1959 territorial analysis of Africans employed on the mines shows that 19.76 per cent. were drawn from the tropical areas of Central Africa, and the figure probably reached the all-time record of 80,000 during 1960. Nowhere, however, do the W.N.L.A. reports stipulate which these tropical areas are. Even when asked, the Chamber of Mines was not prepared to supply a breakdown of the figures.

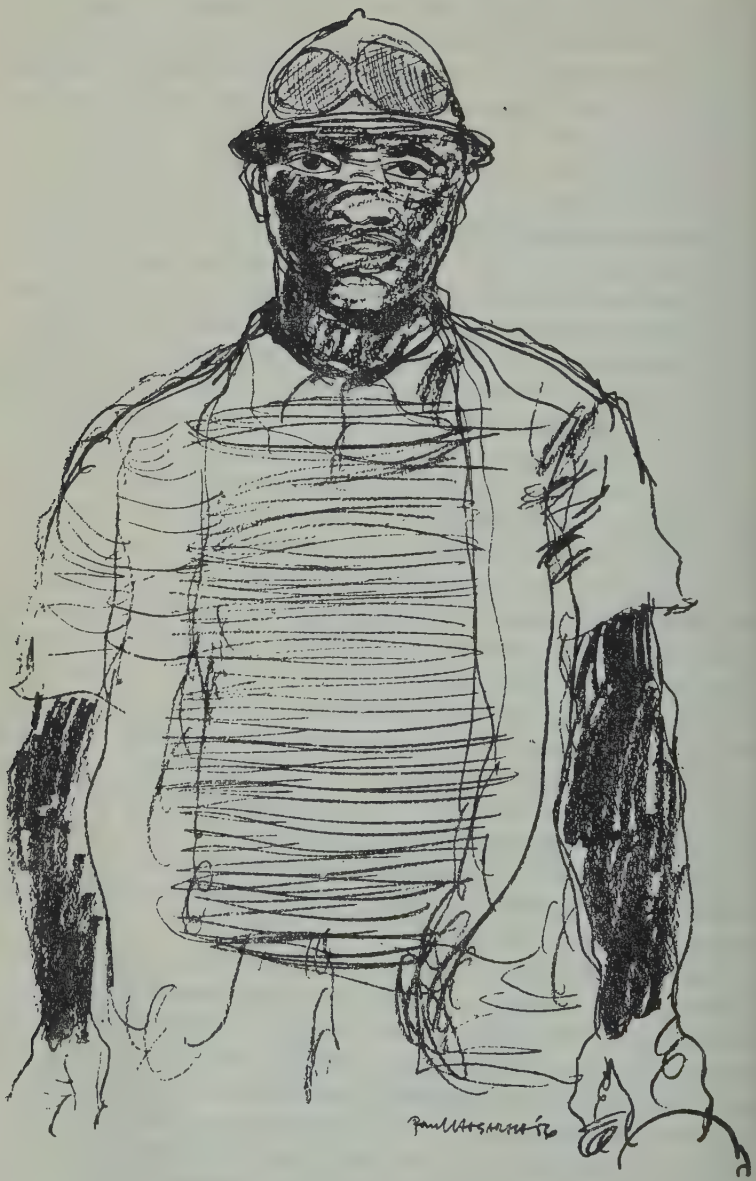
The number of Tropical Africans recruited is regulated by the W.N.L.A. and the governments concerned; but again the W.N.L.A. will not release details of the labour agreements or the quotas fixed for Nyasaland, Tanganyika, Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia and Northern Bechuanaland. The agreements are confidential, a Chamber official told the writer, "because they involve foreign governments".

It does emerge, however, that it was after a 1938 conference with the Governors of Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland that the W.N.L.A. was given recruiting facilities in these territories. In that year the number of Tropical Africans brought to the gold mines was only 15,405.

Once the W.N.L.A. could promote its own recruiting bodies within these countries there was no limit to its scale of expansion.

1300 miles of special W.N.L.A. roads have been cut into Bechuanaland; motor barges ply the Zambesi and the rivers of Barotseland. The Eastern Caprivi strip—running from South West Africa to Northern Rhodesia and dividing Bechuanaland from Angola—is preserved as a game reserve, but the W.N.L.A. obtained permission from the Union government to cut a private W.N.L.A. road through the strip, on which no transport is allowed other than W.N.L.A. vehicles on W.N.L.A. permits.

In Nyasaland a network of labour recruiting stations and sub-stations has been established at Dowa, Mlangeni, Dedza,



Salima, Fort Manning and Mzimba. Extensive airlifting of recruits is now undertaken, and W.N.L.A. operates its own fleet of planes.

Nyasaland has for many years contributed substantially to the labour force of the Union and the Rhodesias, but the W.N.L.A. is the only Union agency permitted to recruit men for work in South Africa. Unless they are contract workers on the mines—or the farms to which 'illegal' immigrants are sent—Nyasas and, indeed, all non-Union Africans are prohibited entrants to the Union and if arrested are liable to imprisonment and deportation.

During 1957 W.N.L.A. was allowed a quota of 16,000 Nyasa recruits (more than double the quota of 3 years earlier); by 1959, it had recruited 19,985 men and had had the 1960 quota fixed at 20,000.

In Northern Rhodesia, Barotseland is the most fertile labour recruiting region for the mines. During 1958 the W.N.L.A. recruited 5,125 Africans from Northern Rhodesia.

Some labour also comes from Angola, but no figures are available.

Whereas the earliest Rand experiments with Tropical workers had to be discontinued because of the disastrously high mortality rate, W.N.L.A. was able by July 1953—a year of happy coincidence, for from this time the Free State developed rapidly and needed to suck in great quantities of labour—to reduce the acclimitisation period for Tropical new recruits from 26 days to 8.

An analysis of labour supply trends over several decades shows that from 1930 to the present day the Transvaal recruiting figures have remained remarkably constant in the 20,000 to 30,000 region; the Cape Reserves—at 133,359 men recruited in 1959—is back to the good years of 1936 and 1939, but not yet at the peak years of 1940 and 1941; the Mozambique quota, controlled by Convention, is the most constant of all; and the increased flow of labour needed since the opening of the Free State mines has come from the Protectorates and the Tropical Areas.

The opening up of Africa by the Chamber of Mines has not been without its problems. Evidence by the Gold Producers' Committee to the 1947 Native Laws Commission of Enquiry recorded the plaint of the Chamber of Mines that: "In the four most important areas—Angola, Tanganyika, Southern Rhodesia

and Portuguese East Africa north of latitude 22° south—the W.N.L.A. is not permitted to open stations or do anything to encourage the Natives to come out for engagement''.

Somehow or another, between 1947 and 1957, the W.N.L.A. managed to circumvent these difficulties. Some labour, like that from Portuguese Niassa mentioned earlier, filters south to be signed on at recognised engagement stations. Angola is a closed book—unless one has access to the Chamber's working records.

Even in Tanganyika, where labour legislation is based on International Labour Organisation Conventions and Recommendations, and not only recruitment but even defined wages are illegal, the Chamber managed to conclude an agreement with the Tanganyika government for the opening of the Tukuya depot on April 1, 1959. The labour quota for this country was fixed at 11,000 for 1960 and raised to 12,000 for 1961, but the flow is to be abruptly cut off by Nyerere's Tanganyika African National Union, in response to the Accra Conference call to stop the supply of labour to South Africa.

Explaining the opening of the Tukuyu depot, the W.N.L.A. claimed that here ''Africans offer themselves for work and are not recruited''. In Tanganyika particularly, but also in general, the W.N.L.A. is these days making great play of this distinction between ''*recruiting*'' and ''*engagement*''. This is because the mines—and the South African government—are acutely aware of the international conventions on recruiting migrant labour. Though South Africa has for years flouted international labour standards with no discernible conscience, it is important to make a pretence of falling in line.

South Africa's labour record is in reality one of the worst in the world.

Of 111 International Labour Conventions passed since 1917 (and South Africa is one of the oldest members of the I.L.O.) South Africa has ratified only 11. These relate principally to night work and underground work by women, accident compensation and wage fixing machinery. South Africa has NOT ratified Convention 29 of 1930 on forced labour; its successor, Convention 50 of 1937; the Convention (No. 97) of 1949; and the Recommendations of 1949 and 1955 for the Protection of Migrant Workers.

Ironically, even South Africa's partner in labour crimes in Africa, Portugal, no longer finds it politic to fly in the face of the Labour Conventions. In 1959 Luanda, chief town of Angola,

played host to a meeting of the I.L.O. Advisory Committee which was attended by nine African States, and Portugal chose this conference publicly to ratify the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention—though this formal recognition of its principles has made little difference to Angola's ugly labour practices. South Africa boycotted the conference altogether.

The Conventions and Recommendations on forced and migrant labour should be read together. The first attempt to stop forced labour was in 1930. South Africa can clearly not go on record against the use of forced and compulsory labour because—migrant labour apart—both the pass law system and the use of convict labour by railways, mines, farms and other private employers, are blatant contraventions of the Forced Labour Convention, and condemned as such by the 1953 I.L.O. Report on Forced Labour.

The definition of recruiting in Convention 50 of 1936 covers "all operations undertaken with the object of obtaining or supplying the labour of persons *who do not spontaneously offer their services* at the place of employment, or at a public emigration or employment office, or at an office conducted by the employers' organisation . . ." Article 10 specifically prohibits chiefs from acting as recruiting agents. Labour from Portuguese East Africa clearly flouts this provision as, in all probability, does labour from areas like South West Africa.

It must remain a fine point whether men "spontaneously offer" their services or are recruited in many areas traditionally reservoirs for mine labour.

Bush-beating by labour recruiters is the most compulsive form of recruiting; but what of the more negative pressures on Africans to stimulate recruiting?

The migrant worker unable to make a minimum living from the land is not a free agent in the sense that he can move into an industrial labour market and offer his labour to the highest bidder. He may not leave a Union Reserve until he gets a pass from the government authorities; and, with exceptions, he gets no pass unless he signs a contract to work on mine—or farm.

Other employment avenues are simply not open to him. Further, only by signing a contract with a labour recruiting agency will the African get a cash advance to pay his fare to the labour market. Incidentally, the mine pays the inward journey of the recruit only if he completes a minimum number of shifts underground.

Once the recruit has signed the contract, he is prosecuted as a deserter if he leaves the mine before completing the contract term. Criminal penalties for leaving work have their counterpart in no civilised labour code.

The Conventions and Recommendations of the International Labour Organisation following the Second World War begin to get to grips with the peculiar labour problems of Africa. Convention 97 on "Migration for Employment" and Recommendation 100 for the protection of migrant workers in underdeveloped countries and territories compose a detailed 'magna carta' for migrant workers like those on whom South Africa's gold mining industry is based.

The general approach of the I.L.O. is that as far as possible the economic and social organisation of the population should not be endangered by demands for the withdrawal of adult male labour. This consideration must be borne in mind by governments before they approve any labour recruiting scheme. An expert investigation done some years ago in the Congo reported that a maximum of 10 per cent. of the adult males could be absent without detriment to village life and agriculture.

Investigations over the years in Basutoland, Bechuanaland and the Union tell of the havoc wrought by the migrant labour system. In some areas 50 per cent. of the men are absent at any one time. This throws the burden of agriculture on to the young, the women and the aged, and—apart from stultifying progress in the Reserves even further and making them even more dependent upon the migrant labour system for cash with which to pay taxes and supplement the grain harvest—has disastrous social effects, shattering homes and depriving children of adequate parental control, among much else.

Article 6 of the Migrant Labour Convention (97) lays down that migrants should receive treatment no less favourable than that given the country's own nationals, including the right to belong to trade unions, social security provisions, and overture arrangements. Recommendation 100 says firmly that "any discrimination against migrant workers should be eliminated".

Migrant labour should receive wages enabling workers to meet minimum requirements and take into account normal family needs. Minimum wage rates should be fixed by collective agreements freely negotiated between the trade union and employers' organisation.

Clause 37 lays down the principle of equal opportunity for

all sections of the population, including migrant workers. Clause 41 states: "The right of association and freedom for all lawful trade union activities should be granted to migrant workers".

The employer should pay the journey of the migrant to his place of work and also the costs of his repatriation when his period of service has expired. The Chamber of Mines does not even do this. Every contract sheet has printed in it the repatriation fee of the worker, which is subtracted from his wages, together with other deductions. Clause 13 even says that migrant workers should be free to waive their right to repatriation, or to postpone their repatriation.

International standards and practice in South Africa are poles apart.

The I.L.O. clearly discourages the whole system of migrant labour, maintaining: "The governments of the countries of origin and destination of migrant workers should endeavour to bring about a progressive reduction of migrant movements."

South Africa took part in the discussions leading up to the drafting of the Recommendations on Migrant Labour, though she did not endorse these Recommendations any more than their earlier cousins. Her written comment on the migrant labour control proposals smoothly claims that she supports provisions for migrant workers, but that such protection can not be given by "measures designed for universal application". "The problems associated with migrant workers vary greatly, and their solution is essentially a matter to be determined between the governments concerned or, in the case of internal migration, in accordance with national laws." The Union government "considers it should be left to national authorities to determine the extent to which any recommendation can be applied to various categories of migrant workers".

Union policy, it was claimed, is against social uprooting: "The movement of workers within the Union is between country and town rather than between territories, and it is considered inadvisable to settle them and their families near their places of employment as they would suffer from the change to crowded urban living conditions. Mining industries are 'vanishing industries', albeit long term (sic!), and it is therefore undesirable to create a large working population entirely dependant on these industries.

"It is also advisable from the social and health point of view that Natives employed on mines should return to their rural

homes at more or less regular intervals. Natives on the mines are almost unanimous in favour of maintaining the present system of migrant labour''.

The only time African miners have ever been able to say what they do or do not want was during the 'forties—in the days of the African Mineworkers' Union, which the Chamber of Mines stamped out after the epic African miners strike of 1946. The A.M.U. offered in 1941 to engage a group of architects to design township schemes on mining property if the mining companies would make available information on the space available. It wanted the total abolition of the compound system, and the establishment of townships on mining property as in Northern Rhodesia.

The clauses relating to trade union rights must have been particularly hard for the South African government to examine, let alone consider endorsing. She neatly hurdled over them by commenting: ''The (trade union) matters affect all workers and cannot appropriately be included in a measure dealing only with migrant workers''.

Governments and the Chamber of Mines have from time immemorial based wage policy on the assumption that the African mineworker is a peasant, able to subsidise his mine wages from the land. This is a fundamental assumption, but a faulty one. Land shortage in the Reserves and the shattering of the African subsistence economy have turned the peasant into a labourer, and wages from the mines are the sole support of increasing numbers of African families in the Reserves, where the majority live perpetually below the mealie-line.

The 1943 Lansdowne Commission into African mine wages examined the assumptions upon which the wage policy of the Chamber of Mines is based. One witness compared the African migrant miner with a white worker who had a private income in addition to his earnings. Would his wages, asked the witness, not be assessed by the rate for the job, without reference to his private income? The Chamber of Mines spokesman replied:

> ''this ignores the fact that the ability of the Native to earn a Reserve income is largely due to the fact that he is granted by the Union government land to cultivate, and pasturage, with practically free occupation of both. In effect he receives a substantial subsidy from the government which enables him to come out to work in the intermittent fashion which suits him.''

Two chief devices keep African mine wages low. The first is the recruiting monopoly of the W.N.L.A. and the Native Recruiting Corporation of the Chamber of Mines, which eliminates competition between mines in the purchase of labour and keeps wages and working conditions static. The Chamber lays down a maximum average daily wage for African miners which no mine may exceed. This system limits the number of men any mine may employ at a higher rate of pay, and so prevents any mine competing for labour with another. Even the most unpopular mine is ensured a regular labour supply under the centralised system of recruiting and wage control. Contracted migrant labour keeps the African worker in a permanently weak bargaining position. He has no option but to accept the terms of the prescribed contract form; and there is no way in which the African worker can use a period of labour shortage to ask for higher wages.

The second device is the recruiting of labour from outside the Union, and this tactic is used increasingly to keep Union wage standards depressed.

When South African labour for the mines is scarce, the policy of the W.N.L.A. is to cast about in other African countries for labour that can be bought at the current low wage rates. The Union shortage of labour at a particular wage rate might not exist at a higher wage rate, but the mines have taken good care not to test this.

The mines get the best of both worlds. When there is a shortage of labour in the Union, the mines do not raise wages to compete for labour with other fields of employment, but recruit further and further afield. When any shrinking of the economy in the Union forces more African workers into low paid jobs on the mines, less labour is drawn from the extra-Union pool.

More than this, the gold mines and their labour system have over the years set standards for prevailing wages in other industries. There is the notorious reply of the Victoria Falls Power Company to the African Gas and Power Workers' Union about to go on strike—no increased wages, since these would create disorganisation in the mining industry.[5]

The Lansdowne Commission noted that there had been a conscious effort by certain collieries to assimilate the rates of

[5] Johannesburg 'Star'—June 9, 1943.

pay and service conditions for African workers to those on the gold mines. If gold mine wages went up, the Commission found, this would have a deterrent effect on recruited labour for the coal mines, so that ultimately the minimum rates of pay would have to be increased.

Every poor farming season in the Union Reserves triggers off an accelerated flow of labour to the mines, because signing a mine contract is the only open door to the Reef labour market. The Chamber of Mines watches the tide of economic and industrial development closely, ready at any time there are signs of economic recession to place an embargo on the outside labour supply from certain territories, or to negotiate for a reduction of the labour quota for the mines from countries to the north.

During 1959 and 1960 the mines anticipated a growing "oversupply of labour" due to recession conditions in some industries and the fact that more and more Africans were leaving their lands for longer and more frequent periods of their working lives. Hard times in the Union are boom times for the mines' labour supplies and help to keep wage rates static.

There is no industry of the size and prosperity of this that has managed its cheap labour policy so successfully. Migrant labour is wasteful, inefficient and far less productive than stable labour; but as long as it is abundant, it can be kept dirt-cheap. The gold mining industry of South Africa has prospered as no other, thanks not only to the opening of the new Free State mines but also to uranium production; profits have reached new heights (a record figure for gold and uranium of £114,908,538 in 1959). African labour productivity has increased, yet African miners' wages, in terms of real wages, are lower than they were a half-century ago.

Chasing down figures of African mine wages is like pursuing dandelions through thick mist. The Chamber of Mines prefers to shelter behind generalities and averages, and treats detailed queries about wages with barely concealed suspicion. The figures of average wages paid are low enough, but they nonetheless manage with great success to conceal the plight of the great majority of African miners working for the scandalously low starting basic wage.

Early records show that in 1890 the average pay of African miners was £3 3s. a month exclusive of keep.[6] From that year

[6]Hatch and Chalmers: 'The Gold Mines of the Rand', published in 1895.

onwards the various mining companies attempted to arrive at a concerted policy to reduce wages; and in 1897, in the first effective wage agreement drafted by the miners, African miners took a wage reduction, to a minimum of 1s. a day and a maximum of 2s. 6d. By 1900 the wage cuts resulted in an average monthly wage of £1 17s. In 1903, when the mines had to reassemble a labour force dispersed by the Boer War, they reverted to an earlier schedule—an average monthly wage of £2 7s. and a maximum of £3. By 1903 the average wage was £2 14s. a month.

The price of gold rose by 97 per cent. between 1931 and 1940. According to the Gold Producer's Committee of the Chamber of Mines, African wages increased by 8 per cent. during this period.

The most searching investigation into African wages and conditions was in 1943, when the government-appointed Lansdowne Commission sat to investigate the wages and other conditions of employment of Witwatersrand African miners.

Evidence submitted on wages showed that African pay rates had not risen over periods of 20 years. At the time of the Commission, the cash wage of the African miner was 2s. per underground shift (£2 19s. 6d. a month) and 1s. 9d. (£2 14s. 2d. a month) for the surface worker. The value of food and accommodation provided by the mines was reckoned to be £2 16s. 4d. a month.

The Commission recommended an increase of 5d. a shift to bring the underground minimum rate to 2s. 5d., and the surface rate to 2s. 2d. It recommended also a cost of living allowance for all African miners of 3d. per shift. These increases, small as they were, were not given in full. Underground workers got the additional 5d. recommended, but surface workers only an extra 4d., while the 3d. cost of living allowance recommendation was ignored. To help the mines meet the extra labour cost, the government for one year refunded the gold realisation charges of £2,054,000. Subsequently the price paid for gold by the S.A. Reserve Bank was raised to include the amount previously deducted as a 'realisation charge'. In effect the government remitted this particular form of taxation to assist the mines meet the increased cost of African labour.

After the Lansdowne Commission, the average pay for underground miners was £3 8s. a month (in addition, payments in kind amounted to £1 10s.). This should be compared with the

figure of £3 3s. a month paid in 1890, before the mines combined to slash African wages.

Between 1943 and 1952 the minimum underground wage rate rose by 3d. a shift, and in 1953 by a further 4d. to 3s. Now, seven years later, 3s. remains the basic wage for the underground miner, and the surface worker earns 2s. 3d. a shift. While there has been an increase of 16 per cent. on the *average* wage of the African miner, made up by small bonus and long-service increases and some improvements in the wages of the minority of higher paid 'boss boys' and clerks, the basic wages have remained static.

When mine wages are criticised as being too low, the mines resort to the well-worn argument that the miner is really supplementing his agricultural income by his stints on the mines, and also trot out the figure of services given the miner in addition to his cash wage. In 1957, for example, it cost the mines 3s. 1d. per African labourer per shift to feed, house and keep him in health. This calculation turns out to be a most revealing one. In 1943 the mines estimated the cost of food and services as 1s. 1d., but the figure had risen to 3s. 1d. by 1957. This represents an increase of 185 per cent. over the 14 years 1943-57. Over the same period, however, African underground wages increased by only 24 per cent. The cost of buying essentials has soared for the mines, which buy in bulk, but not for the African miner!

Even more revealing is the Chamber of Mines method of calculating costs of services per African miner per shift. Figures produced for the Lansdowne Commission show that remuneration in kind was made up of costs of rations, quarters and medical treatment. The total cost of services was 13.4d. in 1943. Food per shift amounted to 5.28d., and hospital costs to 1.15d. The remaining amount of 6.97d. (more than half the costs) was made up by expenditure on the following items: salaries of compound staff; preparation of food, including wages; fees paid to the N.R.C. and W.N.L.A., the Chamber's labour recruiting organisations; passport and registration fees paid to governments; fees to local authorities for sanitation; assessment rates; maintenance of hospital and compound buildings; Miners' Phthisis Compensation and accident premiums; fuel, water and light; fire insurance; clothing and boots; entertainment, education and religion.

The most costly items are fees paid to the Union and Portu-

guese governments and the various governments of Tropical Africa, and recruiting fees paid the N.R.C. and W.N.L.A. The Chamber of Mines thus charges its labour recruiting costs against the figure of services in kind spent on the African miner. The Chamber's statistician admitted, when questioned by the Lansdowne Commission, that "while all these items represent costs to the mines of native labour, they are not all chargeable as benefits to the natives." There is no evidence that the Chamber has altered its methods of accounting for services in kind; and the figure has made a spectacular rise to an average of £3 a month for each African.

African miners get no overtime rates of pay for Sunday, holiday or night work; they receive no sick pay and, even while convalescing, can be put to work to earn their keep at surface work at surface rates of pay; and they have only two paid holidays a year (Christmas Day and Good Friday). To this day the mines are exempt from paying cost of living allowances to African miners.

The meagre cash wage paid the African miner is even lower than the figures produced on paper, for every migrant worker must pay not only the costs of his repatriation, but also has deducted from his pay the cost to the mine of equipping him with two blankets, a singlet and pair of trousers, and a protective tunic. The standard contract form of the W.N.L.A. for a Nyasa recruit, for instance, deducts a repatriation fee of £4 10s. and £2 5s. towards the cost of the protective tunic and other clothing. The repatriation fee covers the cost of the return journey and food provided on that journey to the recruiting depot nearest the recruit's home. If this is some distance from his village, he must pay further travelling costs himself.

Also deducted from the miner's earnings during the period of contract is the annual tax, which is collected by the mines through arrangement with the government concerned, as well as the initial outlay of £2 or £3 remitted to the recruit when he signed on at the engagement station. A Nyasa recruit on the mines for his first work contract will earn a maximum of £46 in twelve months, one tenth of which will be deducted as repatriation fee. After all costs have been deducted, the recruit will be left with something like £39 9s. 6d. for one year's work underground. A second term worker who receives a slightly higher basic wage will earn about £45 in a year of 312 work shifts.

The gold mines ignore the cold facts of exploitation which such figures lay bare and advertise only the "benefits" which the men of 55 tribes from seven countries get in deferred pay to miners and their families (carefully omitting any figures of wages and profits). The mines claim that they generate economic growth; that "the economic distress of the (Union) Reserves is in part relieved by the gold mining industry"; that "they stimulate and stabilise the economy of tribal territories." But then the mining industry always has been a past master at turning economic arguments on their head.

The truth is that migrant labour, the basis for the prosperity of the gold mining industry, has ruined the Reserves and African agriculture and has been responsible for the most blatant exploitation of the largest single labour force in South Africa. Migrant labour impedes agricultural development, keeps wages to rock-bottom levels, and is an excuse for not training a stable force of skilled labour. The evils that migrant labour has brought to the Union's Africans and her economy, it will bring to the African countries whose labour reserves are being milked dry by this system.

Even the mines have had to face that the increasing flow of labour from countries adjacent to South Africa and to her north will depend on the tempo of industrial development in those areas.

'*Tsopano*,' a monthly publication which supports the Nyasaland Malawi Congress Party, maintains that the recruitment of 20,000 Nyasas for the Rand gold mines each year is stripping the country of its most valuable asset—labour. "The reason why the W.N.L.A. is able so easily to fill the quota each year is that there are thousands of Nyasas who are unable to find jobs in their own country. Until Nyasaland has built its economy to the point where there is full employment for all, there will continue to be a section of the population prepared to suffer the indignity and hardship of working in South Africa. . . . The first task of the new Malawi government must be to set in movement economic planning. . . . Until that time measures will have to be taken by the government to protect the interests of those who work abroad. . . . This can best be done by organising a labour exchange and by bargaining with the employers abroad who wish to employ men from Nyasaland."

The prosperity of the gold mining industry has been based on the poverty of Africa and her people; but Africa is changing

fast and can help to make the mines change their labour policy too. While two in every three African miners on the Witwatersrand come from countries other than the Union, and one in five from a Central and East Africa rapidly advancing towards independence, low wages, debased compound life, the suppression of all trade union activity, contraventions of international labour conventions—all these are the concern not only of South Africa, but of the peoples of half a dozen African countries, indeed, of all the continent.

In the next issue we shall publish, as a further contribution to a study of the much neglected subject of South African mining conditions, 'Death in the South African Mines' by Doctor H. J. Simons, an analysis of the reasons for the high accident rate in South African mining.

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AFRICAN TRADE UNIONISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

LEON LEVY

President of the South African Congress of Trade Unions
Arrested in 1956 on a charge of High Treason—he is still standing trial—
and detained during the 1960 State of Emergency.

A STUDY of African trade unionism in the Union of South Africa is as difficult as it is urgent. There is no easy way of establishing the true position of African workers—their state of industrial organisation, their enthusiasm for trade unionism or their struggle to win recognition; for not much trade union literature is available, certainly nothing substantial on African unions. The press, with few exceptions, is not sympathetic to the cause of organised African labour, and reports trade union activity only with reluctance and when heavily pressed to do so by events themselves.

African trade unions, however, do exist, and they are growing rapidly. They have survived constant assault from the Nationalist Government, which, during the twelve years it has been in office, has made vigorous efforts to destroy them.

In this article I shall deal with the South African Congress of Trade Unions, the growth of which may help the reader to understand the true position of the labour movement in South Africa. The Congress, popularly known as S.A.C.T.U., is the only non-racial trade union co-ordinating body in South Africa. It has a membership of fifty-one affiliated unions and represents 53,000 workers—40,000 of these are African, while 13,000 are Coloured, Indian and European. Most of the African unions in South Africa belong to it.

The Congress came into existence in 1955, in order to provide a home for those unions which desired to promote multi-racial trade unionism. It was an important event, produced by an explosion of differences which had long existed in the labour movement.

After the 1922 revolt, when white workers fought their employers and the State itself in order to maintain the supremacy of white workers on the gold mines, General Smuts, Prime Minister at the time, realised that what he called a 'labour aristocracy', composed mainly of white workers, could always be relied upon to support a government based on white supremacy.

In 1924 legal status was given to this aristocracy by the Industrial Conciliation Act, which excluded 'pass-bearing Natives' from its provisions. The principle of a division between white and black workers was therefore entrenched in South African labour politics; and although African unions were admitted to the same trade union centres as white ones, they were not encouraged to participate in the affairs of these centres.

Coming to power in 1948, the Nationalist Party set out to implement a labour policy which drew its inspiration from labour organisation in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. The party was opposed to the existing system of wage control, and proposed that collective bargaining be supplanted by a system of State responsibility. Mr. Schoeman, the first Nationalist Minister of Labour, had announced in Parliament while a member of the Opposition front bench:

> "The body by means of which this so-called collective bargaining takes place is the trade union, but if the State accepts full responsibility for the fixing of wages and the regulation of working conditions, the principal function of the present trade unions will disappear."

Elaborating on the policy of his party, he said:

> "I want to touch briefly on a few of the main underlying principles. . . . First, we contend that wage control and wage fixation should be entirely in the hands of the State.
>
> Secondly, and this is the most important principle—self-government in industry must be eliminated. . . . Self-government in industry and collective bargaining must be things of the past . . . the time has arrived that in the interests of the State, in the interests of employers and employees, self-government in industry and collective bargaining should be eliminated from our economic life.
>
> The people of South Africa want something entirely new, something radical, and it is for the government of the future to give the people a new economic order. That is the only government that in future will ever command the support of the people of this country. I want to assure the people of South Africa that when my party soon takes over the government of this country, we intend giving the people of this country a new economic order."

The new economic order was not long in coming; the Nationalist Government wasted no time. It added the Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act to the Statute Book,

placing 'wage fixation' entirely in the hands of the State, denying the African workers any say in determining their conditions of work, and imposing a maximum fine of £500 and/or three years imprisonment for the use of the strike weapon. While piloting this bill through Parliament, Mr. Schoeman announced that it was intended to "bleed the Native (African) trade unions to death." He did not say that the Government also intended to test the strength of the organised trade union movement for future legislation in conformity with Nationalist policy. The white workers could not but recognise in the Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act the first step in implementing the Government's labour policy, and he watched for their reaction. If they sought the unity of white and African workers in defending the trade union movement, the Government would have to retreat. The white workers, however, watched, heedless, while African labour rights were attacked; and so the Government took the offensive.

It introduced another Industrial Conciliation Bill, which gave the Government power further to weaken the trade union movement by dividing labour organisations on racial lines; to undermine and destroy the power of collective bargaining; and to deprive the trade unions of the right to control their own funds, elect their own officials, and exercise democratic control.

The white workers, who had always been divided over colour policies, were thrown into confusion. They realised that their unions were seriously threatened, and that immediate steps had to be taken to oppose the Bill. The action that they finally chose to take changed the course of trade union history in South Africa.

The existing trade union centre, the South African Trades and Labour Council, had opposed racial discrimination and had admitted unions of African workers to its ranks. For this reason, some of the larger craft unions of white workers had consistently refused to affiliate to it.

As much as the members of the white unions needed the unity of all workers to protect themselves, they feared an alliance with the African workers. In their deep-rooted colour prejudice and fear that they would lose their monopoly of the better jobs, they firmly rejected unity on a completely multi-racial basis and instead decided to present a precarious united front of registered trade unions, catering for white, Indian and Coloured workers alone. This divorce from the African unions was

achieved by forming a new organisation, and the Council dissolved itself after a bitter dispute with a minority of fourteen affiliated unions which were hotly opposed to the dissolution. The new South African Trade Union Council excluded African unions in its constitution and took upon itself the task of protecting the interests of the 'labour aristocracy'. It announced that it would concern itself with welfare and economic needs, adhering to a policy of 'no politics in the trade unions'.

It was a notable victory for the Nationalist Party, which since 1933 had laboured hard to undermine co-operation between black and white workers. In their pamphlet, '*Job Reservation and the Trade Unions*', Ray Alexander and H. J. Simons wrote:

> "The trade unions, being organised on a class basis, and led usually by English-speaking workers with socialist sympathies, tended to alienate Afrikaner workers from Afrikaner nationalism. This formed the main charge levelled by churches, cultural organisations and party leaders against the unions. They were denounced as alien institutions, which had been imported from England, and which were imbued with a spirit which was opposed to the ideals of Afrinaker nationalism."

By 1954 the fragmentation of the non-African trade union movement had reached the highest level in South Africa's history. Organised labour was so weak and disunited that four trade union co-ordinating bodies, with widely differing views, each claimed to represent the true interests of South Africa's workers. Thirty-two unions, representing 144,354 members, openly declared their sympathy with the Government's labour policy. 351,265 non-African organised workers divided themselves into four trade union co-ordinating bodies, while 85,219 workers did not affiliate to any organisation.

In her survey, '*Racialism and the Trade Unions*', Muriel Horrell correctly labels these trade union federations as follows:

> "The *S.A. Trade Union Council* (T.U.C.), the centre body, which accepted affiliation from registered white, mixed and Coloured unions, but not from unregistered African unions. The *S.A. Federation of Trade Unions*, more to the right, with mainly white membership, although two mixed unions were affiliated to it.
>
> The *Co-ordinating Council of S.A. Trade Unions*, further still to the right, with all-white membership, except that one of the affiliated unions had a small separate branch for Indians. The *Federal Consultative Council of the Railways* and considerable

numbers of individual trade unions, which were not affiliated to any of the bodies described above."

It was in this situation that the South African Congress of Trade Unions was formed, on March 5th, 1955, to mobilise the workers of South Africa, irrespective of race or colour, and cater for the ever-growing mass of unorganised African workers who were being absorbed into South Africa's ever expanding industrial economy. It recognised that the organising of this great mass of workers was linked inextricably with their struggle for political rights and liberation from all oppressive laws. Every attempt by the workers to organise themselves was hampered by general legislation affecting their right of movement, domicile and political representation. Every effort for higher wages, for better working conditions, for the smallest advance in factory conditions or the reinstatement of unjustly dismissed fellow-workers was immediately met by the full force of the State.

For this reason, it sought allies among the liberation movements—the African National Congress, South African Indian Congress, South African Coloured People's Organisation and the (white) Congress of Democrats—at that time busy establishing a National Consultative Committee to co-ordinate the activities of the Congress Organisations which had adopted the Freedom Charter in June 1955.

The Consultative Committee also provided an opportunity for discussion and consultation on matters of concern to the whole liberation movement and was authorised to make recommendations for joint campaigns. This was a historic development, for it proved that nationalism which the non-white liberation movements represented to be the very opposite of the exclusive sectarian nationalism for which Afrikanerdom pledged itself to make a last-ditch stand. Moreover this was an important organisational step, for no machinery existed till then for regular consultation among the different organisations, although they co-operated on specific issues.

When the National Consultative Committee was established, S.A.C.T.U. became a willing constituent of it. The five organisations provided their resources and personnel for joint Congress activities; and this helped to make practical organisational activity more efficient and easier. Congress demonstrations and mass meetings attracted large attendances, and working together fostered a healthy atmosphere among the members of the Con-

gress organisations. It mirrored the future non-racial harmony for which the liberation movement was fighting.

In his speech to the 5th Annual National Conference of S.A.C.T.U. held in March 1959, Chief Luthuli summed up S.A.C.T.U.'s role in the liberation movement when he said: "Universally and historically workers, especially urban workers, have perforce been the spearhead of the freedom struggle in the twin functions of—a striving for the amelioration of the lot of the workers in the matter of wages and general conditions of service; the prosecution of the general national liberation struggle. In the context of our country the task is rendered even more onerous and not inconsiderable in view of the apartheid legislation which forbids honourable co-operation among all workers regardless of colour or race, since the law places a legal bar on the formation of mixed unions."

The founders of S.A.C.T.U. were convinced that a mere struggle for the economic rights of labour, without participation in the general struggle for political emancipation, would condemn the trade union movement to ultimate purposelessness.

The task of organising new African unions and co-ordinating the existing ones was formidable, for the restrictions placed in their way were designed to force them out of existence.

The African workers, however, had learned to understand the importance of trade union organisation, and had seen how effective such organisation had been in protecting the interests of the white workers. Moreover, there existed a clear enthusiasm not only within the ranks of the existing unions of African workers, but also among those industrial workers still unorganised. S.A.C.T.U. was in itself an expression of this new mood; and now it had to give expression, in an efficient and organised manner, to the aspirations of the growing industrial labour force.

It could do this only by welding into a single unit the loosely-organised unions of African workers and those affiliated registered trade unions which had greater facilities for organisation. It never abandoned the white workers as a lost cause, and it propagated the idea of multi-racial unity, in spite of white labour's apparent resolution to look to the State and not to trade union unity for the protection of its living standards.

There were, and still are, severe difficulties hampering the growth of African trade unionism. When African workers in a single industry agree to form themselves into a trade union, they

must first of all find a central meeting-place in which to constitute the organisation and formulate demands to present to their employers. Their homes and places of work are many miles apart; and so the centre of the city is the most convenient area in which to meet. In his survey, '*The African Worker in South Africa*', Alex Hepple, till 1958 Leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party, writes:

"There is a legal restriction upon meetings in the mines. The War Measures Continuation Act, re-enacted in June 1954, extends for a further period Regulation No. 10 of Proclamation 210 of 1939, which empowers a magistrate to prohibit meetings of more than 20 persons on mining ground in the Transvaal.

Outside mining ground there are other restrictions upon gatherings of Africans. In terms of regulations proclaimed under the Native Administration Act, 1927, no gathering of more than 10 persons is permitted in 'Native areas' without the permission of the Native Commissioner or Resident Magistrate. In African townships and locations, regulations framed under the Native (Urban Areas) Act provide for the control, supervision and restriction of meetings or assemblies of Natives. Outside factories, townships and locations there are other restrictions. Traffic and Municipal laws are often invoked to prevent meetings.

In Johannesburg no meetings can be held in a public place without the permission of the City Council. In Cape Town, permission for a public meeting can be withheld on the grounds that it would 'obstruct or interfere with the traffic.' Pass laws are also invoked to prevent African workers from holding trade union meetings. For example, a protest meeting in the Cape against the Industrial Conciliation Bill was raided by police, and five Africans were arrested and charged with infringing the pass laws."

If these difficulties cause too much delay in forming the union, the alternative is to visit the workers in the factories. Access to factory premises, however, is denied to organisers of African unions, and when they are discovered on factory premises they are arrested and charged with trespassing.

Factory meetings are therefore held illegally in the street, where they not only court police intervention, but attract the attention of the employers and expose to possible victimisation those workers who display too much enthusiasm.

Once a sufficient number of workers has been organised into a union, there remains the very difficult task of finding office accommodation in the centre of the city, which is usually classified as a 'white' area. When, however, a landlord does agree to let an office to a union, the arrangement is usually short-lived, and the members who then come to the office and find it empty assume that the union has gone out of existence.

The new union now encounters its next difficulty, communicating with employers. Although it is not illegal for African workers to establish trade unions, their unions are not entitled to registration or recognition by the State. The Industrial Conciliation Act specifically excludes African workers from this right, and the Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act excludes African workers from all direct bargaining with employers. Alex Hepple writes:

> "Should a dispute arise, a Native Labour Officer (white) must report accordingly to an Inspector (white) who in turn informs a Regional Committee (comprising a white chairman and three African members) all appointed by the Minister. Between them all, the dispute has to be settled. If they fail, they must refer the matter to the Native Labour Board (comprising a chairman and as many members as the Minister may decide to appoint—all white) which body is constituted to seek a settlement. If this fails, then the Board may recommend that the Minister recommends the Wage Board to investigate and make recommendations. So unpopular are the Native Labour Officers that they are often accompanied by detachments of the police. Of late, the Special Branch of the police (Political Department) have been most active in disputes, and the workers have begun to identify the Department of Labour with the C.I.D."

When a strike occurs, it resembles a small-scale civil war. Lorry loads of police armed with batons, sten guns and tear-gas bombs are rushed to the factory; great "pick up" vans arrive and all the strikers are arrested. A typical example of this method of handling disputes was the strike of 288 workers—200 of them women—employed at the Jones Canning Factory, Industria, Johannesburg, in January 1959. These workers protested against their being forced to work on Christmas Day and claimed that they had been short paid for that day. While their spokesman presented their grievances to their employer, the workers sat on the ground. When the police arrived, however,

they were not given an opportunity to negotiate directly with their employers, but were arrested. They were not even permitted to remove their overalls, gumboots and work caps before being pushed into the vans and taken to the cells to be charged with illegal striking.

The employers are warned by the Native Affairs Department or the Labour Department not to enter into negotiations with the workers or their representatives and are required to dismiss the strikers and employ other labour.

In South Africa there are tens of thousands of African workers who embark on strike action, and many thousands have been convicted under the Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act. The pressure which they bring to bear on employers varies according to the organised strength of the strikers themselves.

The strike of the Amato Textile workers warrants special mention, for an account will help to give a vivid picture of what happens in South Africa when workers strike. In reporting this strike on February 20, 1958, the newspaper '*New Age*' stated:

> "With police and Native Affairs Department intervention in the Amato Textile Mills dispute came the collapse, at the end of last week, of direct employer-union negotiations, followed by a vicious police attack on the workers which had Benoni up in arms. At the time of going to press, the Amato Mills, the largest textile factory in the Union, was at a standstill; and at the beginning of this week, 3,800 Amato workers were refusing to report for work through the Labour Bureau in Benoni or have their dispute handled by Native Labour Department officials. The lock-out, says the African Textile Workers' Industrial Union, followed the refusal of the Native Labour Board officials to allow direct negotiations between the firm and its workers. The firm claimed that its hands were tied and it was not free to negotiate."

In an article in the June 1959 East Africa edition of '*Drum*', Nathaniel Nakasa writes of those who were sacked from the Amato Textile factory:

> "Hungry, pregnant mothers . . . worried husbands with no money to pay rent, to feed their kids . . . grim faced fathers daily ducking the police because their passes bear the 'Get out of this town' stamp. . . . It all began when nearly four thousand workers pressed their boss for more pay. . . . Workers were chased, heads were cracked, blood flowed.

And while the heads were still healing, the factory remained silent. You can't run a mill without workers. Before long over three thousand of the workers were taken back. But it wasn't quite like the old days—nearly 400 of the men had not been taken back. Most of these men are searching, asking, hunting for a job they can't find. There's Tifi Kasipoti, for instance, who went the job-hunting rounds and got himself fixed up at a steel window factory in Benoni. Kasipoti lasted three days. An Inspector of the Native Labour Department in Benoni ordered him to quit his job because of 'some influx control regulation.' Kasipoti told me when I sent to see him, 'My new boss didn't want to let me go, but the Inspector insisted'."

"Another man I met was John Phala, who was also sacked from Amato. He said: 'Everybody here is against the men who were fired from the mill. It makes things hard for us when we have to deal with the pass office or influx control people.' Then there's David Nyakoane, married with six kids. He had been endorsed out of town. . . . 'What do I do? Where do I go?' he asked, not expecting an answer."

Another case in point is that of the Durban stevedores who demanded wage increases from their employers. The employers brought in policemen, the Department of Labour and the Native Affairs Department to intervene. What could have been settled amicably between the workers and their employers reached an ugly situation when the police baton-charged the workers. Four workers were seriously injured and 87 were arrested after a baton charge by a detachment of police broke up a gathering of 1,500 dockers.

Apologists of the Nationalist Party and the employers often seek to explain away this denial of trade union rights to African workers by saying that Africans are at heart primitive, tribal people who cannot understand the complexities of trade unionism. The truth, however, is most clearly revealed in the pamphlet, '*Job Reservation and the Trade Unions*', by Ray Alexander and H. J. Simons:

"Mr. Schoeman gave another reason for refusing recognition. African unions, he predicted, would inevitably 'be used as a political weapon' and 'the stronger the Native trade union movement should become, the more dangerous it would be to Europeans in South Africa.'

The first proposition seems likely. Since the major disabilities

of Africans as workers have been imposed by Act of Parliament and are enforced by the State, political action will be indeed needed to obtain relief. We may therefore expect African as well as Coloured and Indian trade unions to support political movements against white supremacy. Whether, and in what sense, such movements would be 'dangerous' to white people are questions to which no certain answers can be given."

Having organised the workers in the factories, found an office, and won a tenuous recognition from employers, the union then makes an effort to extend its membership. This task presents further difficulties, for the bulk of African workers are employed in unskilled and semi-skilled jobs, while many of them live in the Reserves and return to them at intervals, to be replaced by other workers. This means that the union must engage more organisers and issue more trade union literature in order to explain to the newcomer in industry the need for trade union organisation.

An African union which has developed as far as this can be said to have accumulated a store of experience. In the efforts of the union to build itself, union leaders in the factories have often been dismissed, and the organisers thrown out of the factories or arrested. Strikes have occurred and battles for reinstatement have been waged. All this has helped the union to become resilient to Government attacks on it in the form of bannings under the Suppression of Communism Act. Of this law, Alex Hepple has written in his book, '*The African Worker in South Africa*':

"The definitions are so wide that they constitute a grave danger to trade union activities. They expose workers to severe penalties if they violate industrial laws in the course of fighting for decent treatment.

Under this law, any African trade union can be declared to be an unlawful organisation; its members deemed to be Communists, and its members 'named', making them subject to severe restrictions upon their liberty. Under the Suppression of Communism Act, many leaders of trade unions have been banned by the Minister of Justice and removed from office. In this way, unions have been deprived of experienced officials. Of those 'named' and banned, half are Africans."

The success of S.A.C.T.U. can be attributed to the unique co-operation which its affiliated unions of necessity give to it. It is responsible for having started a campaign for a national

minimum wage of £1 a day; and this demand is now recognised by employers in all wage negotiations. It has achieved *de facto* recognition of African unions in many industries by negotiating and settling disputes between workers and employers. At the International Labour Organisation, it has exposed the practice of using convict labour on farms and in industry in South Africa. It has fought racial discrimination and encouraged the workers to fight against legal oppression.

S.A.C.T.U.'s outspokenness for racial unity and its sharp criticism of undemocratic practices has been the only serious opposition to the Government put up by organised labour. This truth is borne out by the fact that in 1956, 23 trade unionists from S.A.C.T.U. were arrested on a charge of High Treason. In 1958 many were convicted of incitement, and in 1960 scores were detained under the State of Emergency. The Government has also invoked the Suppression of Communism Act and the Riotous Assemblies Act in order to silence S.A.C.T.U. field workers.

True workers' solidarity was far too often better appreciated through trade union lectures rather than actual experience, for colour divisions ruled out this feature of labour activities. The fight of the non-white worker appeared to be a lonely one, waged in a most distant sector of the world.

The rise of the liberation movements in Africa, and the granting of full independence to some States, however, enabled trade union organisers to inspire workers at the factory gates. Workers listened attentively to reports on African Prime Ministers and countries which were governed by their African populations. For the first time, the continent of Africa took on a meaning in the factory cloakrooms. The experience of other African countries that have accomplished democratic government has emphasized the part played by organised trade unionism in liberation. It is a lesson that is not being lost on the Africans of the Union.

THE CRISIS IN THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCHES

REV. JAMES OGLETHORPE

A Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa, now on study leave in Holland.

YEARS ago, when his was still a lone voice, Professor B. B. Keet predicted that the Afrikaners, because they are a Bible-reading people, would eventually reject the apartheid ideology as unscriptural. Now, at long last, the persistent voice of Scripture is being heard not only by a few individuals within the Church but by the Church itself, while the Word of God is causing an ever widening crack in the thick layers of natural theology which up till now has dominated the Church's thought on race relations. It would seem that the pressure of events has brought into the open the perennial dilemma of whether the Church should acknowledge other sources of divine revelation alongside Scripture, or whether Scripture alone should shape the faith and life of the Church. Apparently the Church is coming to the conclusion that it cannot support a system which contradicts the clear teaching of the Bible.

Before analysing this estimate any further, a few things must be said about the Afrikaans Churches themselves. First, "nation" and " church " share to a very large extent a common history. In all the important crises which have led to the formation of an intense national self-consciousness in the Afrikaner people, the Church has played a decisive role. On the one hand, therefore, any attack on the Church has always been regarded as a national affront, while on the other hand any crisis within the Church will to a greater or lesser extent reflect a crisis within the nation.

In the second place, there does not exist merely one Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa. There are three separate denominations bearing more or less the same name, but each possessing its individual tradition and structure. For more than a century the three Churches have gone their different ways, with little or no real contact. More often than not they have been at loggerheads on issues such as which is historically the oldest in South Africa and therefore the ' authentic ' Church of the Afrikaners, and whether or not hymns should be sung in church.

These differences have recently been accentuated by the respective attitudes of the three Churches toward the ecumenical movement. The smallest and most conservative of the three (Gereformeerd) is violently opposed to membership of the World Council of Churches. The second largest (Nederduits Hervormd) is a member of the World Council, but only for reasons of expediency, and the unanimous opposition of its delegation to the statement of the Johannesburg Conference is a clear sign that its membership is to be terminated in the near future.

The third and by far the largest of the Dutch Reformed Churches (Nederduitse Gereformeerd) is divided within itself over the issue of affiliation. There are five completely autonomous Synods, of which only two (Cape and Transvaal) are members of the World Council. No decision of any of the five Synods can in any way be regarded as binding on the other Synods, so that unless all five individually agree, it is impossible to speak of a concensus of opinion. Furthermore, as a result of the widespread missionary activities of these Synods, no less than nine so-called daughter (dependant) Churches have come into being among the Africans and Coloured. (It is probable that the five "white" Synods of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk will soon unite. That there is apparently no intention to include the "daughter" Churches in this union is hard to reconcile with the many statements on unity which have been made in the recent past.)

Traditionally the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk has favoured a policy of "separate development". This has, as we have already seen, led to the establishment of separate Churches for the different ethnic groups and the practically complete exclusion of Africans and Coloured from the "white" Churches. In the field of politics, the Bloemfontein Conference of 1950 maintained that total territorial separation of the races was the only possible solution to the racial problem in South Africa. The Conference decided that immediate steps should be taken to bring this separation about and that white South Africa would have to learn to become completely independent of African labour. The apartheid regulations governing the present mixed society could only be condoned, the Conference declared, as interim measures directed at the safeguarding of racial identity. Once the ideal of vertical separation had been reached, these admittedly unfair and discriminatory regulations would automatically disappear.

Underlying this view is the belief that total territorial separation is a practical possibility to be achieved without delay, even though it should require enormous sacrifices from the whites. The corresponding conclusion to be drawn from the Church's view is surely, therefore, that if it becomes clear total separation is *not* possible, then there would be no justification whatsoever for the continuation of discriminatory regulations against the African and Coloured population of South Africa. Strangely, however, despite the evident immorality of an approach which makes the end justify the means, and the dismissal by Dr. Malan —Nationalist Prime Minister from 1948 to 1953—of the concept of total apartheid as politically and economically unworkable, the Church has clung tenaciously to its view. A declaration on the racial situation was published on behalf of the Church in 1957. Drawn up with the help of men like Professors Keet and Ben Marais, the declaration clearly stated that there is no scriptural justification for the separation of ' believers ' on grounds of colour or race. Yet, despite this obvious rejection of apartheid within the Church (the declaration was passed by all five Synods), the Church calmly went on practising apartheid as in the past, maintaining that the day would come when total apartheid would be enjoyed. The concept of the total separation of the races into independent States acted as an escape clause, enabling the most fanatic supporters of apartheid to vote for the unity of all believers. This unity would only become operative, of course, when total apartheid was finally and conclusively proved to be unworkable. The racialists within the Church clearly believed that this could never be done.

Now, however, the bubbles are beginning to burst! You can hear them pop in the minds of ministers of the Church as one by one they take a public stand against the discrimination inherent in apartheid. A young missionary in the Cape, David Botha, has published a book, ' *Die Opkoms van die Derde Stand* ' (The Rise of the Third Estate) in which he rips to pieces the arguments in favour of the " separate development " of the Coloured. In ' *Delayed Action*', eleven prominent theologians have published their aversion to apartheid as practised in South African society. Meanwhile study groups, under the active leadership of men like Rev. C. B. Naudé of Johannesburg and Rev. A. J. van Wyk of Stellenbosch, met and prepared reports, which provided the substance for the Statement issued by the Johannesburg Conference of December, 1960. In Johannesburg

a group of young ministers from the different Churches meet regularly to discuss and decide on their responsibility in the racial situation. Clearly, enough is happening to make the men in government feel distinctly nervous. The Church is influential enough within the nation to bring about a radical change in political practice.

There are certain aspects of this development within the Church which need stressing:—

- As a result of its tremendous missionary effort, the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk feels a special responsibility towards its African and Coloured members, and it will not be a party to any indignities which through apartheid permanently handicap these members.
- Approaches to the Government through private delegations have proved futile. Dr. Verwoerd and his Cabinet are obviously prepared to ignore any advice which clashes with their ideology, even though it comes from leading members of the Church.
- A strong desire on the part of N.G.K. leaders to come to an agreement with the English Churches on cardinal points of principle may lead to a new alignment of the Protestant Churches in South Africa to replace the existing Christian Council, of which the N.G.K. is not a member. This will undoubtedly lead to more effective action by the Churches than has hitherto been possible.
- The pressure of the intellectually influential, Afrikanerdom-based South African Bureau of Racial Affairs (SABRA) on the thought of the Church cannot be denied. Many of the clauses of the Johannesburg Statement are the direct result of some new thinking within SABRA itself.
- The Johannesburg Statement cannot be regarded as the official view of the Church until it has been ratified by the Synods. This will not happen without a hard and perhaps prolonged struggle.
- If it does happen, this will mean another long and laborious process to gain acceptance for the Statement among the ordinary members of the Church.
- The Statement itself is still hampered by the fateful ' escape clause ': " a policy of differentiation can be defended from the Christian point of view; it provides the only realistic solution to the problems of race relations and is therefore in the best interests of the various population groups ".

As in the past, the retention of this clause will probably have the effect of indefinitely suspending all the constructive aspects of the Statement.

- The belief that apartheid can be theologically grounded is still very strong. '*Die Kerkbode*', official organ of the whole Church, is a vigorous proponent of this line of thought.
- The attitude of the Cape organ of the Nationalist Party, '*Die Burger*', is a pointer to the strong element in the Party's leadership which thinks like the Church, especially over the treatment of the Coloured people.
- The Nederduits Hervormde Kerk, by publishing its own minority statement at the Johannesburg Conference, has unequivocally come down on the side of the Government. Its attitude after the Conference can be summed up as follows: "We are the real defenders of Afrikanerdom, and the N.G.K. leaders have behaved treasonably". There is no doubt that in this way they hope to get a large number of the die-hard laymen of the N.G.K. to join their Church. It would be unfortunate if this caused the more liberal leaders within the N.G.K. to hold back.

There are undoubtedly many hopeful signs that at last the Dutch Reformed Church is realising that it cannot be the handmaid of an ideology which makes unChristian demands upon its supporters. One of the most hopeful of these signs is the number of letters from ministers and laymen which regularly appear in '*Die Kerkbode*', protesting against developments which are logical aspects of apartheid but contrary to Scripture. Once the Word of God in all its purity seizes hold of the minds of men, there is no possibility any longer of a compromise with its enemies.

WHITE TO MOVE?

PAUL FOSTER

This study of British East Africa today, of the peoples who inhabit it and its prospects in the future is written by a man who has worked at one of the few institutions that bridge the different races, the University College of East Africa. 16 plates **25s.**

EYRE & SPOTTISWOODE

THE BOTTOM OF THE BOTTLE

CAN TEMBA

Comes a time when a man feels that everything in his personal organization cannot much go on as before. No dramatic decision may be taken, in some bursting hour of change. But all the same, a man may feel that those in their bits of rag who have for so long been meekly begging at the gate of his mind, can no longer be joked or carefully drunk away.

I remember well one of those days during my bottle blindness in Sophiatown. We were in the House of Truth—my room at 111 Ray Street, Sophiatown, Johannesburg—I and all those young frustrated Africans who flitted through the half-legal life of the urban African in the Union.

They were all there that day. Philip, the Health Inspector, who had been with me at Fort Hare; Peter, his younger brother, who was annually being baulked of Matriculation by the requirements of a supplementary examination in that malevolent subject, English (Higher Grade); Oubaas, the timeless one, who read morbid things like '*The Inferno*', '*Paradise Lost*', and '*Dr. Faustus*'; Maxie, scared stiff of two fingers of brandy, but obsessed with impressing the girls; the Kabaka (so called because his uncle once "exiled" him from home for his shiftlessness); Jazzboy, miniature like the saxophone that brought him girls, liquor and an occasional beating-up; I, their host.

The table was spired with bottles of brandy, gin, beer, and we were at the stage of high discourse, much like the majestic demons in the burning pit.

For a moment, as I looked at those young men around me, the luxury of a mild flood of conscience swept over me. They had all at one time or another had visions: to escape their environment; to oppose and overcome their context; to evade and outdistance their destiny; by hard-work and sacrifice, by education and native ability, by snatching from the table of occupation some of the chance crumbs of the high-chaired culture. Lord, it struck me, what a treasury of talent I have here in front of me. Must they bury their lives with mine like this under a load of Sophiatown bottles?

It was conscience that struck me, I say, because I knew that many of them looked up to me, my way of life, and repeated my despair and its defences behind my back. I knew that they were

excited by me when I said: "Why should one believe in anything, when one could live—live, gentlemen, at 212 degrees Fahrenheit? The trouble is, gentlemen, for me, human nature stinks; but that is all the material we have to work with." They said these things I said. But never with my own deep sense of doubt, the sleepless, tossing suspicion that often made me itch in the very heat of my enthusiasms.

I think the rest of African society looked upon us as an excrescence. We were not the calm dignified Africans that the Church so admires (and fights for); not the unspoiled rural African the Government so admires, for they tell no lies, they do not steal, and above all, they do not try to measure up to the white man. Neither were we 'tsotsis' in the classical sense of the term, though the 'tsotsis' saw us as cousins. I swear, however, that not one of the gentlemen who associated with me in that period was guilty (caught or not) of murder, rape, assault, robbery, theft, or anything like that. True, we spent nights at police stations, but it was invariably for possession of illicit liquor or, its corollary, drunkenness. We were not 'cats', either; that sophisiticated group of urban Africans who play jazz, live jazz, and speak the township transmigrations of American slang.

We were those sensitive might-have-beens who had knocked on the door of white civilization (at the highest levels that South Africa could offer) and had heard a gruff "No" or a "Yes" so shaky and insincere that we withdrew our snail horns at once.

An incident that Oubaas related to us illustrates this "Yes". He had been working for a white man of truly untraditional generosity of spirit. This boss allowed Oubaas to drive his car on private jaunts, to share lunch with him, to visit his house for a drink. Sometimes Oubaas even brought him into the nether world of the township where he liked the abandon of its denizens. And his politics? Positively anti-white, if not altogether subversive! They were back-slapping buddies, Oubaas and his boss.

Then one day there came into the shop—a chemist's—an old white lady. She gave her order, and it turned into quite a fair-sized parcel. The old lady wanted to carry her parcel into her car, but the boss would have nothing of it. The old lady insisted that she could manage. And the boss insisted . . .

"Don't worry, my *boy* will carry it out for you. That's what I hired the *native* for."

Boy and *native* are hardly terms used in respectable race-relations society. Something in the white man's intonation makes these innocuous words feel like barbed wire across a bare back.

Oubaas, normally not ungallant, was furious. But, for us, the joke was on Oubaas. He did not walk out on that nice boss at once, but went on working for him long months afterwards.

But for the most we savoured of life pungently. Living precariously, cheekily confronting the world's challenges. I, for myself, deliberately cocooned my mind away from the stirrings around it. 1948, the Nationalists took over power in South Africa. 1949, the Youth League forced their Programme of Action into African National Congress policy. 1952, the Defiance of Unjust Laws Campaign was launched. 1955, the Freedom Charter was proclaimed. 1956, the massive Treason Arrests took place in pre-dawn raids. 1960, Sharpeville! Colossal shadows of huge, angry politicans fell upon and affrighted us. Something there was that thundered in the skies.

Yet nightly we repaired to the House of Truth, swinging bottles of brandy filched from the dark cellars where the white man hid his courage from us, and drank ourselves cold.

By this time it was becoming clear to me that I was really fighting something inside that nibbled at my soaked soul. Yet, what the hell! We were cavaliers of the evanescent, romantics who turned the revolt inwards, upon our own bruised spirits. It was flight, now, no more just self-erasure.

Something happened one night that made me sit up and think. We had been drinking as usual, and the casualties were lying all over my room: on the bed, over the studio couch, sprawled across the floor. I was sitting at the table, with a half-full bottle in my hand, and trying to make a floozie who was too far-out to distinguish Cupid from Dr. Verwoerd. Then there came a knock on the door. I reeled over to open it and admit two very well-known politicans. The one was a shadow of a shadow, and he had that "lean and hungry look". But it was the other, bulkier man who really blurred through my half-consciousness.

He was huge and shaped like a barrel whose oblong began at the knees. He had arms like distorted zeppelins with Russian sausage fingers at their ends. His face ballooned at you as he breathed, and that face was black for you, wilfully black.

He spoke in a voice that was eternally hoarse.

"Can Temba, we'd like to talk to you," he grated.

I motioned them into seats which they took like senators.

He wasted no time. "Look," he said, "the fight is on. We know that you're not a membah, but this fight is for Ahfricah. We want you all, nice-time boys"—here he looked at me accusingly—"tsotsis, teachers, businessmen, lawyers, doctors, all! The Ahfrican Nahtional Congress is not a political party, it is the organization of every Ahfrican, every Ahfrican."

"But how do you know what I think?" I parried.

"Man," came the lean man impatiently, "you're black, are you not? You're an African, are you not? So long as you're black we know what you suffer and what you think."

"I see," said I, evasively. "What is it you want me to do?"

"We want your support, man," said the big one, aghast at this political moron. "We hear that you've got some young men about you, and you can make them do things, do things that we don't think are in the nahtional interest. Will you be with us?"

I jerked up my thumb automatically and barked, "*Afrika!*"

"*Mayibuuuyé!*" they rasped.

They had risen at the salute, and nearly upset the table. My bottle was staggering, but I caught it swiftly. I served a glass and offered them some, but they refused. I gulped my drink down so that the tears came to my eyes.

"So you are with us?" asked the big man as they prepared to go.

"Sure," I said, "sure," hugging my beloved bottle.

But as they went out, I fancy I heard the lean one muttering: "He's drunk, that's all."

After that, perhaps largely because I paid more attention, I heard more and more *politics*: bitter, heady, virulent stuff. It expressed in venomous terms the wrath of a people who had come to the damn-it-all threshold. Also the despair of a people tied helplessly to an ant-heap: it was savage swearing. What struck me more those days was the great number of ordinary folk who spoke politics.

For the machine that was ploughing up the country could not leave one square inch undisrupted. In Zeerust, Sekhukhuneland, Pondoland, official policies were driving the tribesmen to resistance.

That was odd. Hitherto, the bad boys had been the urban Africans. They were "spoiled", tried to "imitate the white man", were the targets of "agitators, Communists and tsotsis", and above all a sore to the segregationist faith of our masters by

their insolent infiltration into the holy preserves of whitedom; they were the *black peril*, the direct descendants of the treacherous impis under Dingaan, if you can take the contradiction.

But, increasingly now, our all-tolerant country brothers rose up against the authorities, not in lawlessness, but because the Government's policy of retribalization rode rough-hooves over tribal custom and degraded the true position of the chief.

The tribal areas showed clearly that there had once been an ordered peaceful system by which tribes were able to live. It was a system of society and government that Africans knew to belong to their own customary sense of justice, and what was proper. The shadiest nuance of interpretation in the *Kgotla* (Tribal Council) could lead to spirited argument where even the chief could be required to explain his innovations. For the chief, too, was bound by custom.

With all its limitations, this other world composition served the needs of the times. It merged with the simple economy; it expressed the tribal psychology; slowly, with patient humour, it absorbed the wisdom and the philosophy of the fire-place—but it was so made that it could roar into violence at a moment's blowing.

The institutions of a system like this—a system that served the needs so well—could not just die, even with the change of times. They just adapted themselves by natural differentiation to new requirements. And the genuine among them asserted a new influence in an even more dynamic environment. The witchdoctor's craft survives in the most revolutionary politics. The principle of *free debate* attends every discussion of significance. The women exert their oblique, but very effective influence on every project of importance.

But our old-world tribal state was not to be left *virgo intacta*. The fifteenth century hurled at us the economic and adventurous restlessness of Europe, and subsequently the mania called the "Scramble for Africa" shuddered the sub-continent. The sheer physical impact of the assault was enough to stagger the edifice of tribalism. I can almost see my infinitely great-grandfather, leaping to his feet on a rock and gaping at a sailing ship seeking harbour—all his patriarchal dignity forgotten, as he exclaims, "*Hau!*"

Yet these white men did not just bring things of wonder: the Floating House, the Booming Stick, the gaudy beads. They also brought ideas—evil, good, indifferent—ideas such as could subvert and demolish our tribal system. Funny, the idea with

which they impressed us most is not Justice or Love Thy Neighbour or Liberty, Fraternity and Equality or Live and Let Live—no, but simply: you acquire a right to a right only by force. And they are still busy, through the centuries, trying to live down that spectacular bit of basic education. For us, it is only recently that you needed sugar-coated slogans to cover that profound "truth" of Western, civilized morality.

But then we were barbarians both.

The ideas did their bit, but it was only when our labour was needed that a deliberate drive was made to haul us out of our tribal havens to come out to work. And where tribalism did not help to demonstrate "the dignity of labour", tribalism had to be smashed. They were so bloody successful that now they fear they have drawn too many of us into the fields of urban industry and have sired themselves a problem.

Obsessed with the one purpose of smashing a tribal system that seemed to spurn the blandishments of the white economy and so frequently to defy white authority, the crusaders of Western Christian Civilization sought not for a moment something in tribalism to be saved. The authority of the chiefs and of custom was scorned, the first called "barbarian savages", and the second "contrary to the principles of natural justice and civilization".

By Union the work of demolition was almost complete. All that remained now was the tidying of effective control over the Africans. It quickly became clear that the urban African was going to present the more intractable problem. He had so soon got the hang of the white man's ways. He did not turn a hair at slurs that his grasp of "civilization" was purely "imitative", "superficial", "evanescent". He just went on to learn how to drive a car, man a machine—good lord, he was even playing at trade unionism and politics!

Moreover, as the momentum of the initial process had not played itself out, more and more Africans were squeezed from the Reserves and the farms to try their luck in the cities. Again, they didn't give a damn for those who lamented "the spoiling of the pure native", "the falling for the temptation of cheap, city glitter", "the misguidance of city spivs and incendiary agitators". The city called and the peasants came.

Of course, some semblance of tribal integrity remained in the Reserves, but the migrant labour system made a pretty delinquent bastard out of it. Men came to the mines for a spell,

lived in compounds and soured the city only in hectic excursions, then went back to awe their home-keeping brethren, or to dismay their chiefs and elders with their outlandish ways.

But tribalism was crumbling all over and the Africans were fast becoming a race of city-dwellers, with snatched visits to the Reserves. Hard economic and social laws dictated that these people would seek to adjust themselves into some form of permanence and security; and in the process demand the conditions that would facilitate such adjustment.

Somewhere near this point, the authorities decided that the whole process of African urbanization should be repudiated as a policy if not altogether as a fact, let the skies crack! And the simple method projected was the retribalization of the people and the re-establishment of the authority of the chiefs—at least, that is, those chiefs who would keep their noses clean and obey the Government. And where tribal custom did not suit, for tribal custom chooses its own chiefs in its own way—well, who the hell is running the show, after all?

Meantime, however, other things had happened.

Largely because of the efforts of the African National Congress, but to as large an extent because of the industrial and population changes in the country and the excessive emphasis of white politics on *colour*, Africans were everywhere debunking tribalism and contemplating each other as *Africans*, themselves as a *nation*—whatever the guide-books of the State Information Office say.

And this African view of themselves does not confine itself to South African blacks. It identifies itself with all the black people of Africa; it breathes out the "African Personality"; it palpitates in time with the heartbeats of Accra. It strives hard to make itself vacuum enough to receive "the winds of change" from the North. And against this there is nothing to engender a peculiar South African loyalty: not a black middle class; not a stake in the land, its wealth, or, for that matter, its law, order and good government; nothing to make enough of them hesitate at the contemplation of this country's destruction.

The conflict between the opposed forces seems inevitable: the (roughly) white nationalism poised before the (not too roughly) black nationalism. The dilemma is so complete!

As I brood over these things, I, with my insouciant attitude to matters of weight, I feel a sickly despair which the most potent bottle of brandy cannot wash away. What can I do?

THE SALISBURY TALKS

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WHAT was remarkable about the February Constitutional Conference in Salisbury was not its initial outcome, but the fact that it took place at all. It was remarkable that Sir Edgar was so ready to accept delegates from the National Democratic Party. He had directly rejected the representation of the N.D.P. when he was composing his delegation for the Federal Conference. Then he had changed his mind and taken them with him to London. There he excluded them from the abortive territorial talks.

It was also in some ways remarkable that the National Democratic Party leaders were so ready to attend. They ran serious risks in doing so, as we shall see. They refused directly to accept Sir Edgar as chairman of the preliminary discussions before the arrival of Mr. Duncan Sandys. Then, when Sir Edgar was firm, they gave way. They demanded that the detainees still held under the Preventive Detention Act be released before the Conference began and were under the impression that this had been promised them. All the detainees were not released, and Sir Edgar maintained he had never given any assurance that they would be. But the N.D.P. delegation attended nonetheless.

It was remarkable, when you come to think of it, that Sir Edgar should sit down under the chairmanship of Mr. Duncan Sandys to plan the future of Southern Rhodesia with Mr. Joshua Nkomo, President of the N.D.P. and former President of the African National Congress. Mr. Nkomo's predecessor as President of the N.D.P., Mr. Michael Mawema, is at the moment under sentence of four and a half years imprisonment, having been found guilty of continuing to be a member of and to organise an unlawful organisation—a judgement which, unless it is reversed on appeal, can hardly mean anything but that the N.D.P. is a continuation of the African Nationalist Congress under another name, and therefore itself an unlawful organisation. Mr. Nkomo's former lieutenants in the African National Congress are in Marandellas jail coming to the end of their second year of imprisonment—an imprisonment which it is

hard to believe Mr. Nkomo would not be sharing with them, if he had not chanced to be outside the Federation that night two years ago when they were all dragged from their beds. Mr. Nkomo has several times publicly announced that Sir Edgar Whitehead has no right to leave him at liberty, while the men who worked under him are in jail. But Sir Edgar is not likely to arrest the man he has decided to recognise as the real leader of the Africans, however odd that decision appears in the context of Sir Edgar's determined attempts, since he came so unexpectedly to office, to make sure no African party should exist, let alone receive recognition.

That the Conference took place at all then, is clearly remarkable. This is the first time in the political history of the country that the leaders of the African and of the European parties have sat down together to discuss the future of the country. It is not a little thing, that either side had accepted the other thus far.

If the Conference itself was remarkable, however, what has come out of it is not. The constitutional proposals that issued from the Conference are timid, disappointing, complicated and unconvincing. It has been claimed as a great triumph for the Conference that any agreement was reached at all. It undoubtedly would have been if any real agreement had been reached. In fact it was not. The right-wing Dominion Party has completely rejected the proposals. The National Democratic Party made it clear that the proposals were not acceptable, but that their delegates did not vote against them merely because some of the proposals are an improvement on the present situation. This leaves the United Federal Party itself and the now politically nugatory Central Africa Party to congratulate each other on their common acceptance.

The proposals themselves divide easily into those concerned with the abdication of Britain's powers in Southern Rhodesia and the establishment of constitutional safeguards in the Colony itself on the one hand, and, on the other, those concerned with the franchise and representation in the Legislative Assembly. It must be remembered that Sir Edgar Whitehead has for some time made the abolition of the 'Reserve Clauses' and the acquisition of 'complete independence' by Southern Rhodesia an important plank in his political platform. Since Britain's powers in Southern Rhodesia are already very close to a dead letter, this fuss has always seemed somewhat artificial; but here, if nowhere else, was a problem which could perhaps be settled

once and for all and be made to appear some kind of achievement. In the event, even this issue is still far from finally settled by the proposals. The British Government has agreed to remove the 'Reserve Clauses' which allow it to withhold consent from bills passed by the Southern Rhodesian Legislative Assembly, and to relinquish, if certain agreements can be reached, the control that it has in theory over 'Native Department' matters: and it is to empower the Southern Rhodesian Assembly to pass laws which will have extra-territorial effect. On the other hand, Mr. Sandys was noncommittal about abolishing the British Parliament's right to legislate for Southern Rhodesia. Though this right may almost be considered to have lapsed, since it has never been used since the Colony became self-governing, it could in conceivable circumstances still be of importance. As 'Safeguards' in Southern Rhodesia, there are to be a Declaration of Rights, a Constitutional Council, appeals to the judiciary open to any person who is affected by a law he thinks contrary to the Declaration of Rights, and final appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. It is not possible to examine these provisions in detail because their details have not yet been established. It is just worth pointing out that it is only new legislation that can be challenged when it contravenes the Declaration of Rights. With the laws he already has on the statute book, Sir Edgar need hardly feel himself circumscribed in consequence. In his broadcast after the Conference, Mr. Nkomo dwelt at length and with satisfaction on these and the other safeguards. They were thus contrasted with the proposals for the franchise and representation, which Mr. Nkomo declared to be quite unacceptable.

To understand the attitude of the N.D.P. to the Constitutional Conference, two things must be borne in mind: first that it was something of a triumph to get the franchise, which is not itself strictly a constitutional matter, onto the conference agenda at all; secondly, that for the N.D.P. this sort of Constitutional Conference, held under the chairmanship of a representative of the British Government, has almost since the creation of the party been the great immediate goal to which it has moved. Any radical party which has no power or means of exerting influence through the established constitutional framework is always liable, when it expounds its aims, to the questions—"How are you going to bring these things about? By bloody revolution and the overthrow of established authority?

or what?'' The N.D.P. had answered, conveniently but also with conviction, that it would insist on being present at the Constitutional Conference called to settle the future of the country which the Prime Minister was always talking about, and then it would convince the British Government that very great changes had to be made.

If we examine what the party has secured, we find it is very little. At present the Southern Rhodesian legislature has 30 members, all elected by an overwhelmingly European upper roll, and a lower roll of special voters for which there are no exacting qualifications and which is mainly African, but which is closed whenever the special voters number *one-sixth* of the whole registered electorate.

Under this system and the systems which preceded it, no African has ever been elected to a seat in the House. Now, under the new proposed constitution, the House will be enlarged to 65 members. 50 will be elected by the old upper roll, now called the 'A' roll. The old lower roll, now called the 'B' roll, will also be allowed to vote for these seats, though the 'B' roll votes will be scaled down until they amount to only a quarter of the 'A' roll votes cast. 15 will be elected by the 'B' roll, but 'A' roll voters will be allowed to vote for these seats—though here again their votes, whenever they exceed one quarter of the 'B' votes cast, will be reduced to that fraction. In practice this would provide for 15 African seats—but even if one or perhaps two of the 'A' roll seats went to African nationalist candidates (and this is the very most they could hope for) there would still be not only a majority but a *two-thirds* majority for the European parties; a majority which would remain, as far as one can see, short of a real revision of the franchise, indefinitely. After all, it is the franchise and not special representation which carries power. Under the new proposals the 'A' roll franchise remains unchanged, except for the insignificant addition of five hundred African chiefs and headmen. It is true that the qualifications for the 'B' roll have been widened, and probably many new thousands of Africans will now be able to vote. Indeed, the 15 'B' roll members will almost certainly represent real African opinion. They will still, however, be a powerless minority in the House.

For anyone unused to the Central African game of paper constitutions, all this will seem fantastically complicated. It is not difficult, however, to see the drift of the U.F.P. in this

proposed system of double rolls and cross voting. Sir Edgar Whitehead said quite directly in his broadcast on the proposals that the say of the 'B' roll in the 'A' roll elections, and the say of the 'A' roll in the 'B' roll elections, will make it difficult for extremists of either side to be elected. Mr. William Harper, leader of the Dominion Party, rejecting the proposals on behalf of his party, pointed out how the voting system must always favour "a left-wing party" i.e. the U.F.P. against the D.P.

Will the Europeans accept the new constitution? Sir Edgar Whitehead clearly seems more concerned to avoid the accusation of pushing his electorate, of acting before European opinion has had a chance to form and express itself, than he is to get the constitution approved. The constitution is first to be drawn up in detail and then published in numbers large enough to allow every voter to have his own copy, and finally time is to be given for study and discussion before the referendum (upper roll voters only, of course) is held. When he broadcast to the country, Sir Edgar cynically directed his speech towards the European voter. He stressed how little was really being given away, how the 'A' roll which is the real key to power remains virtually unchanged.

On the other side, the Dominion Party has decided that its hope for the future depends entirely upon winning a referendum result against the new constitution. It is probably right in this. One wonders whether it is right also in counting on a massive swing against Sir Edgar and his policy among Europeans. Certainly there are signs that opposition to Whitehead from the right is growing. His opponents can point out, on the one hand, that since he came to office there have been disturbances, rioting, bloodshed, and on the other, that he has been ready to sit down and talk with African nationalist leaders. New right-wing groups have emerged, and there is now a right-wing newspaper 'The Dominion Times' bulging with hostile comment upon both Sir Edgar Whitehead and Sir Roy Welensky. The Dominion Party, having taken an extreme stand by playing on fear and hatred, has an easier campaign until the referendum than has the U.F.P.

Finally, what of the N.D.P.? The delegates and indeed the whole party leadership must have known that there was no chance of their securing from the Conference either their demand for "one man, one vote" or anything near to this—although even while the Conference was proceeding, the party reaffirmed

its determination to stand by this demand and nothing less. The problem the delegates faced, therefore, was to accept whatever they could get and as much as they could get without giving any members of the party the impression that they thought it was adequate. Obviously many members of the party were shocked by the failure to gain anything substantial in franchise and representation. The cable from Mr. Leopold Takawira, the party's London representative, condemning the proposals and declaring the "outside world shocked by N.D.P.'s docile agreement", found seconders inside the party in Southern Rhodesia. Mr. Takawira and Mr. Mawema were suspended, and Mr. Nkomo flew directly to London.

On February 17 Mr. Nkomo announced his party's complete repudiation of any constitutional agreement. "My delegation", he stated, "made it perfectly clear that they did not accept the franchise system and representation in the agreement. My party has endorsed this rejection and sees nothing else to support, when the means of effecting their political influence are denied them through a clever fancy franchise and a white-dominated parliament". At the same time he announced that he would recommend the rescinding of the suspension order against Mr. Takawira and Mr. Mawema. The Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, Mr. Sandys, continued to claim that the N.D.P. had accepted the agreement. As Mr. Nkomo announced, however, "A leader is he who expresses the wishes of his followers; no sane leader can disregard the voice of his people and supporters".

'*The Times*' commented on February 18: "The implications are grave. The Southern Rhodesia agreement which the right-wing European Dominion Party refused to accept from the start, now lacks also the support of the only African nationalist party represented at the conference table. It is in short a dead letter, and it will not be surprising if Sir Edgar Whitehead, Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, sees in this a strong argument for Southern Rhodesia's secession from the Federation."

THE FUTURE OF THE FEDERATION

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ONE fact stands out from the confusion and inconclusiveness surrounding the end of the Northern Rhodesian Constitutional Conference. The whole might of Britain has backed down before Welensky. The territory's future is still not clear; but all the portents of disaster are present, and there is virtually no sign of hope. Britain seems to be at her old trick of introducing a constitution which pleases nobody and upsets everyone. At the same time it seems incredible that Mr. Macmillan, that harbinger of the wind of change, and Mr. Macleod, that "great Christian gentleman", have completely lost their nerve and abandoned, without even a show of fight, the plan for an African majority to which they are committed in the eyes of the African and British publics alike and by the implications of innumerable undertakings of successive British governments. One is still, therefore, left wondering dazedly whether they have something up their sleeves.

It is not that politicians don't break their word, at least if they are Conservatives. But how could two such downy birds have blundered into a position where the most ignominious, undeniable scuttle, the most discreditable public about-face was forced upon them at the last moment by the pressure of Welensky, of 72,000 Northern Rhodesian Europeans and some 90 right-wing Conservative M.P.'s? After all, they must have foreseen when they decided—and there is ample evidence that this *was* decided several months ago—on an African majority, a Nyasaland type constitution, in Northern Rhodesia, that it would be hotly opposed by Welensky and the settlers, that these would be backed by Lord Salisbury and the right wing of the Conservative Party, and that, though the Rhodesian Selection Trust might be complaisant, it was unlikely to commend itself to Mr. Oppenheimer and Anglo-American. They must have known that they would be subject to every form of threat, pressure and appeal from the current rulers of the Federation to prevent a reform which, it must always have been perfectly apparent to anyone who knew anything about the subject, would make the continuation of the kind of white

supremacist Federation that Welensky wants impossible. They must have considered how to resist these threats, pressures and appeals and have decided that it could be done and was worth doing. They are not, when all's said and done, babies. And it is virtually inconceivable that Welensky was able to surprise by some quite new unexpected and overwhelmingly powerful menace they could not withstand, because he has nothing of the sort up *his* sleeve. He cannot, like Mr. K., threaten to turn his rockets upon London, because he hasn't got any. And yet, to all appearances, Mr. Macleod opened the Northern Rhodesian Conference a week or two ago in the firm expectation that it would recommend to him, in the wilful absence of the United Federal Party and Dominion Party delegations, a Nyasaland type constitution, that he would accept this advice, impose by his own legitimate authority such a constitution, and require the Federal government to accept it. To all appearances, he panicked in the face of the U.F.P. boycott, the "secret mission" of Mr. Greenfield, Federal Minister of Law, and the success of Mr. John Roberts, Northern Rhodesia settler leader, in whipping up 90 Conservative members to support the 1958 White Paper—an antiquated document from the Lennox Boyd era—which favoured "keeping power in civilised hands" and "keeping racialism out of politics", and which—in the double-talk then prevalent—meant European supremacy and indeed still does. The proposition doesn't make a lot of sense; but it is hard to see how anything else can be true, hard to resist the conclusion that, as '*The Times*' put it on February 18th, "the British government have allowed themselves under pressure of events, to be hurried along the easy path of evolving intricate formulae to disguise what has happened."

Precise details of the proposed, new revised constitution have, mysteriously enough, not yet been divulged; but it seems certain that they will encompass an upper (mainly European) roll, electing 15 members, a lower (African) one doing the same, and 15 further members to be elected by both rolls together. The exact effect this will have depends upon the qualifications specified and, in a country with so unnatural a distribution of population as Northern Rhodesia, upon the delimitation of constituencies. (Nothing has been leaked about the executive, which might afford a fruitful field for racial conflict and discrimination whatever the composition of the legislature.) This might just possibly result in a small African majority in the

Legislative Council; and it is even just possible too that Mr. Kenneth Kaunda and the other African leaders at the Conference might have accepted it if it had been presented clearly and openly to them in all its detail and, with this implication underlined, as Britain's firm and considered intentions at the outset. After all the secrecy and evasion, however, the backstairs intrigues with Sir Roy and the Federal Party, unless the new proposals contain important and hitherto unforeseen and undisclosed concessions to Africans, the only effect of the Conference will have been to show that Britain's policy is dictated from Salisbury, that Welensky wags Westminster. It is inherent in the situation that no constitution agreeable to the U.F.P. can be agreeable to the United National Independence Party, and *vice versa*. Britain must use her authority to enforce what she thinks just and right in the long term interests of Northern Rhodesia. And as long as it appears to the Africans and their leaders that everything submitted to them has been previously approved by Welensky behind closed doors, they will view it with, if possible, more suspicion than it deserves. It is hard to see how they can feel any confidence in the present British government or indeed in Britain at all.

The abandonment of principle and betrayal of trust involved in the manoeuvres which have taken place are evident if one recalls the undertakings given by the British government at the inception of Federation. Lord Munster, then Under Secretary of State for Colonies, said in the Lords on July 6th, 1953: "The charge that has been levied against the government in many quarters that Federation would delay or even bar the political advancement of Africans in the northern territories is without any foundation at all." And Mr. Lyttelton, the Colonial Secretary, said in the Commons on July 27th: "I cannot repeat often enough that the Federal constitution gives the Federal government no power whatever either to retard or accelerate the political advancement of Africans in any of the constituent territories; no power to interfere with the territorial government in this matter. I am thinking particularly, of course, of the northern territories. . . . For example we shall be discussing alterations of the constitution of Northern Rhodesia in September this year. . . . These discussions will be carried out and decisions reached without its being necessary to obtain any agreement from the Federal government. . . . It would clearly only be sensible that their views should be sought, but I assure

the House that their concurrence is not necessary for anything that we may decide. I give that as an illustration to bring home the point." Well, well, the point has certainly been brought home in the past few weeks. The Federal government *has* delayed the political advancement of Africans in Northern Rhodesia, the Federal government *has* interfered with the British as well as the territorial government, and Britain *has* regarded Federal concurrence as necessary to anything it may decide. It is hard to know too what has become of the Monckton Commission's repeated warnings that the Federation as at present constituted cannot continue and that any Federation held together by force is bound to collapse.

True there is at the moment of writing a bare possibility that the arrangements for electing the 15 members by both rolls may, as has been said, be so manipulated as to provide an effective African majority of a sort that Kenneth Kaunda and Harry Nkumbula as well as Sir John Moffat could accept with a good grace. It is just conceivable that Macmillan and Macleod are using some mysteriously delicate footwork to outwit Sir Roy and will present the African and liberal leaders with such a solution after all. To do so would restore confidence; and one can, if one likes, cling to such possibilities as a minute chance of hope. It remains hard to perceive the reason for such mystification and delay. And if Britain has anything to offer the Africans of Northern Rhodesia except disillusion and betrayal, it is vitally important that this should be made clear quickly. The danger of an outbreak of violence which African leaders will be unable to control in the crowded Copperbelt centres is enormous and grows daily. Kenneth Kaunda's position of authority cannot be indefinitely maintained on a basis of pure frustration. His eclipse and replacement by others—perhaps less wise and reasonable than he—would be disastrous.

What Welensky is working for is pretty evident. He hopes to be able to persuade the Federal Review Conference when it resumes later this year that significant liberalisation has taken place in both Southern and Northern Rhodesia, not forgetting the Monckton Commission's remark that "no new form of association is likely to succeed unless Southern Rhodesia is prepared to make drastic changes in its racial policies." He can then present the case that a majority of all the inhabitants of the territories desire a continuation of Federation, so that Federation shall be finally ratified and established, freed from all existing

restrictions on its freedom and given 'dominion status'. In fact, Nyasaland, about which he doesn't care a lot anyhow, will be free to secede, but the all-important Northern Rhodesia will, he hopes, be pinned down by a bogus liberal constitution. He may foresee some hard arguing from some of the African representatives at the Review Conference, and there probably will be plenty; but he is playing an inherently losing game—there are thirty-six Africans to every European in the Federation and nearly all of them are against Federation—for high stakes. He is concerned to keep Southern Rhodesia from leaving an association with a Northern Rhodesia too liberal for it (that is one with an African majority), and Northern Rhodesia from being free to secede from Federation with a Southern Rhodesia too European-dominated to suit its taste. He wants above all to preserve some sort of Federation of which to go on being the Prime Minister. These tactics are his best chance; and if the British government is ready to go on dancing to his tune, he might even bring his gamble off, for the time being.

It does not matter to this game that the alleged settlement in Southern Rhodesia is altogether meaningless, provides no significant liberalisation and has little chance of being accepted by Europeans, let alone Africans. Sir Edgar Whitehead must regard himself as expendable for the good of Federation, however little love he has for Sir Roy personally, as the affair is likely to bring about his fall. It is, after all, just a matter of papering over the cracks, and the paper need only stick till after the Review Conference. Sir Roy is strangely confident that he can set everything in order afterwards, if left to himself, that he has the strength to hold the whole world of Northern and Southern Rhodesia on his shoulders in one piece, if he can get permission to, by his mixed tactics of calling out European reservists and admitting Africans to railway restaurant cars.

The National Democratic Party's repudiation of the Sandys constitution for Southern Rhodesia is therefore timely. It disposes of the myth of "drastic changes" there and makes this game a lot more difficult to play. Both this and the apparent deadlock in Northern Rhodesia only bring us back, however, as it were to square one. We are up against settler determination to impose Federation by a mixture of tyranny and chicanery that has been proving itself impossible ever since 1953; that had indeed been recognised as impossible by the Labour government which first considered Federation, by the time it fell in 1951. We

are back to the deadly, familiar opposition between white pretensions and black aspirations revealed by the disturbances of 1959. And we see that, after all, Britain has apparently learnt nothing, the settlers have learnt nothing, and the Africans have learnt to place little reliance on the words of white men, however fair they sound.

Further trouble and violence lie inevitably ahead, perhaps of the most protracted and tragic nature—and it will be no good blaming it on the Africans, who have been led to expect bread and look like getting stones—unless Britain awakes again to her true responsibilities. These are to free Northern Rhodesia immediately, as well as Nyasaland, and allow them both to decide their own futures. If this means the secession of Southern Rhodesia, this must be accepted. It will mean economic recession there, but this is better than the destructive disruption of the whole of Central Africa that will result from continuing Federation by force. Perhaps in adversity Europeans could learn to accept Africans as real partners, since they cannot do so in prosperity. If Southern Rhodesia can solve its own racial conflicts, there is no reason why it should not return, with an African majority, to join a Federation stretching beneficently from the Limpopo to the source of the Nile. Meanwhile there is no excuse for extending those racial conflicts to Northern Rhodesia through an enforced Federation of incompatibles, and Britain will be shortsightedly wrong if she supports this by surrendering to Sir Roy Welensky.

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SUMMITRY AT CASABLANCA

MARGARET ROBERTS
Economist and Journalist

BEFORE they met, the question everywhere asked was what the ' Casablanca powers ' have in common. What drew together in January 1961 the Heads of State from Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, the United Arab Republic and the Algerian Provisional Government, joined by the Libyan Foreign Minister and Ceylon's Ambassador to Cairo? There were well-founded rumours that, at some stage, others had been invited—Nigeria, Ethiopia, Liberia, Togoland, Somalia, Sudan, Indonesia, India and Tunisia—though the last seems doubtful. Although this was never denied, the official implication was that the invitations had been ' limited ' at the last minute to those who actually attended. The obscurity which surrounds this point makes even more interesting the issue of what precisely united these eight angry delegations.

For the delegations were without question angry—and determined and extremely ' serious ' about what had brought them together. It was not a propaganda or a ' solidarity ' conference, but a series of very hard-working sessions. These men were united by their common anger about the immediate issue of the deteriorating situation in the Congo. Of the other States allegedly invited only Indonesia, and to some extent India, share what can be described as the ' Casablanca ' view of the Congo crisis. If any long-term significance is to attach to the coalescence of these particular eight States at this point, it has yet to reveal itself in any convincing way.

By the end of 1960 every one of the States represented which had troops in the Congo had threatened to withdraw them, and Guinea had already started to do so. They had taken this step in protest against the failure of the United Nations Operational Command (U.N.O.C.), as they saw it, to fulfill the Mandate under which it had been established. They had witnessed in the Congo, in the presence of the U.N., the assumption of ' central government ' by a member of the Congolese National Army with no constitutional standing and no established political support; the imprisonment and ill-treatment by that ' government ' of the main leaders of the unitarian cause, including the constitutionally elected Prime Minister; the return of Belgian

technicians, ' advisers ' and military ' volunteers ' to the armies and administration of the secessionist and federalist Congolese authorities, presumed to be pro-Western; the break-up of the Army into a number of largely tribally-based, conflicting units with little predictable allegiances, and the consequent constant threat of civil war. Their resentment was completed by the seating at the U.N. General Assembly, with the support of the Western nations, of the representative of the federalist elements of President Kasavubu alone.

All this arose, in the ' Casablanca ' view, from the U.N.O.C.'s failure to support the central government of the Congo which had invited it in. They argue that since the U.N. was never intended to govern the Congo itself, it could only operate through a properly constituted Congolese authority; and if ' no intervention in Congolese affairs ' entailed failure to support that authority, then only chaos could result, since the position of U.N.O.C. was then an impossible one. Evidence that the Western States were apparently exploiting the chaos to ensure the ultimate ascendency of assumed pro-Western leaders lent credence to the ever-latent belief that new forms of colonialism—' neo-colonialism '—are never far from the surface. The only solution in their view was, clearly, the immediate restoration of the constitutionally established government of President Kasavubu and Prime Minister Lumumba, operating through the Congolese Parliament with the support of the U.N.

This has always been the stand of Ghana's President Nkrumah. The fact that he had not by the end of last year declared his intention to withdraw Ghana's troops from U.N.O.C. arose from his profound belief that only the U.N. is *potentially* capable of producing a lasting settlement for the Congo. Article One in the Pan-Africanist faith, of which Nkrumah must be described as a prime architect, declares the paramount importance of keeping Cold War conflicts out of Africa: it is interesting, for example, that when that principle came in conflict with Nkrumah's own cherished belief in unitary government—when Lumumba threatened to call in the Russians to bolster his campaign for unitary government—it was to the former principle that Nkrumah sacrificed the latter. He strongly advised Lumumba to seek a settlement with Kasavubu rather than involve the Russians.

In Nkrumah's view the failure of the U.N. could only open the Congo to the full blasts of Cold War conflicts. The West

would almost certainly continue to support the assumed pro-Western leaders; while the Communist bloc would use the opportunity to give overt support to the government of Lumumba and the army of Gizenga. Open civil war was the only possible outcome. And since no African State can be indifferent to the fate of the Congo, this would lead to an African division along Cold War frontiers, with a farewell to Pan-Africanism and neutralism alike.

This was Nkrumah's dilemma at Casablanca. It was the dilemma of everyone at the Conference, and it is perhaps the most dangerous dilemma facing the world today. Mali, Guinea and—probably to a lesser extent—the United Arab Republic pressed for the immediate withdrawal of all African and Asian troops, and the recognition of the ' Stanleyville government'. That meant in effect dismissing the U.N.O.C. as a *de facto* instrument of neo-colonialism; and despairing of its role towards a future settlement. Ghana, probably with the support of Ceylon and Morocco, favoured a new attempt at persuading the U.N. to return to first principles.

Both these points of view were incorporated in a communiqué hammered out with evident difficulty in the serious determination by each State represented to abide by it. It amounted to an ultimatum to the U.N. Ghana pledged herself together with the other States to the " intention and determination " to withdraw her troops from the Congo, unless U.N.O.C. changed the nature of its operation in accordance with the principles laid down by the Conference. A detailed course of action was specified. It included disarming the Army and bringing it under one responsible authority, releasing Lumumba and all other members of the elected government, and restoring the operation of the Congo Parliament with authority over the whole territory. It is significant that Lumumba was not singled out for special support. What was laid down were the essential conditions and principles for the re-establishment of constitutional Congolese government, of which Lumumba was still the Prime Minister. The communiqué ended with a threat—a concession to the Guinea-Mali view. The States represented reserved the right "to take appropriate action" if their conditions were not met by the U.N., and such action was generally believed to refer to open support for the Stanleyville ' government ' of Lumumba and Gizenga.

About two weeks after Casablanca, the Security Council met

to debate the Congo. The Western nations and their allies voted solidly against, and therefore defeated, an Afro-Asian resolution proposing much the same programme as the Casablanca communiqué and supported by the Soviet Union. In response, Indonesia and every one of the Casablanca States—except Ceylon and Ghana—announced dates for the withdrawal of their troops.

Lumumba's death will be the last straw for most of the Casablanca States. Except for Ceylon and Libya, all of them have officially recognised the 'government' of Gizenga, Lumumba's Vice-Premier, in Stanleyville. When the Security Council met early in February, before the news of Lumumba's death, there were signs of some realistic thinking at last by the new American administration. Britain and France, however, combined with Belgium in strong diplomatic pressure against Kennedy's proposals and especially against suggestions to disarm Congolese forces. The Security Council resolution that eventually emerged, however, conformed broadly to the Casablanca demands. Sponsored by the U.A.R., Ceylon and Liberia, and passed by 9-0, with France and the Soviet Union abstaining, it urged the "use of force, if necessary, in the last resort" to arrange cease-fires and "the halting of all military operations"; "the evacuation from the Congo of all Belgian and other foreign military and para-military personnel and political advisers not under the U.N. command, and mercenaries"; the convening of the Congolese Parliament; and the reorganisation of Congolese armed units to eliminate their interference "in the political life of the Congo".

If the Congo problem was the most pressing issue before the Conference, the formulation of the ' African Charter of Casablanca ' may yet come to represent its most lasting achievement. The Charter does two things. The Preamble establishes the new doctrine of the need for vigilance against ' neo-colonialism'. This concept looks like usurping straightforward ' colonialism ' as the common enemy and as a force for African unity, at least for the militants of the continent. The Preamble is soberly couched. The section on foreign bases, for example, is a statement of desirable ultimate ends rather than a probably unrealistic call for immediate action. It declares the " determination . . . to discourage the maintenance of foreign troops and the establishment of bases which endanger the liberation of Africa and to strive equally to rid the African continent of political

and economic interventions and pressures.'' There was apparently some argument over this section; but Morocco and Libya, both with foreign base commitments for the next few years, won the day against the starker militancy of Guinea, Mali and the U.A.R.

The main body of the resolution announces the establishment of an African Consultative Assembly and four permanent bodies —political, economic and cultural committees, and a Joint African High Command. Each will comprise the relevant representatives of independent African States, and will meet periodically to co-ordinate and establish common 'African' policies. Experts are to meet in the next three months to set these organisations on their feet.

The form of these institutions is significant. First, it opens the door to association by African States who were not represented at Casablanca, even though they may not be in agreement with the other resolutions passed at the Conference. Second, it is interesting that the Conference adopted a functional approach to African unity rather than the more militant political approach of Presidents Nkrumah and Sékou Touré. None of the institutions established seems to envisage more than regular voluntary consultation and co-operation in practical fields. This approach is generally canvassed by Nigeria and Ethiopia, and its adoption at Casablanca, without so much as a mention of the whole controversy, represents a real concession on Nkrumah's part. Whether he will be content to abide by it is difficult to say. His public speech at the closing session was in effect a call for political union, and thus implied dissatisfaction with the Charter as it stands. But since there is little doubt that for the moment at least the practical, functional approach is more widely favoured in Africa, these institutions may prove effective in the regular co-ordination of African interests and policies. This depends very much, of course, upon whether they can attract the participation of other independent African States.

The other resolutions made up a rather mixed bag. There was a fairly routine declaration on the Sahara nuclear tests; and one on Algeria pledging unconditional support for the Provisional Government, condemning the referendum and '' assistance given by N.A.T.O. to France''. The Algerian representatives themselves resisted pressure for any immediate severance of diplomatic relations with France, favouring a threat to do so if the war should continue.

A special resolution condemns South Africa and the '' imperial-

ist powers '' which support her. It goes on to '' reaffirm and undertake to implement '' resolutions passed at previous African conferences. It is worth asking why these resolutions have not yet been implemented by these States. The failure cannot be blamed on the forces either of ' colonialism ' or of ' neo-colonialism'. It is worth recalling that the Conference of Independent African States at Addis Ababa in June 1960 called for South Africa's exclusion from the Commonwealth, and it was signed by Ghana and Nigeria. Presumably this intention was confirmed at Casablanca? Its implementation should not prove too difficult, given the proper degree of determination.

Nasser achieved a moral victory by committing the Conference to the view that Israel is '' an instrument in the service of imperialism and neo-colonialism, not only in the Middle East but also in Africa and Asia''. The effect was to some extent offset however, by a speech in Ghana from the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Kojo Botsio, a few days later, in which he expounded upon the cordial relations between Ghana and Israel. Though Dr. Nkrumah has since stated publicly that he stands by the Casablanca resolution on Israel, it is not easy to envisage its practical implementation in Africa—for the near future at any rate.

A similar moral victory was achieved by Morocco on the subject of Mauritania—which, she claims, is a part of Morocco and should never have been given independent existence. Mauritania's independence is denounced by the Conference, as a French plot to '' encircle the African countries, ensure for herself bases to which she can retreat, and increase the number of her satellites ''; and the Conference resolved to '' approve any action taken by Morocco on Mauritania for the restitution of her legitimate rights''. Again, there was little apparent enthusiasm for this cause outside the Moroccan delegation. Ghana had recognised Mauritania's independence before the Conference started.

What does it all amount to? From one point of view, you might say, very little. Even on the Congo issue—on which there was, and is, considerable real agreement—the ' Casablanca powers ' have not subsequently acted in unison, nor have they given much evidence of mutual consultation before they acted. The African Charter has yet to prove itself, and its success depends very much on the participation of a wider circle of African nations. This is not likely to be helped by vendettas

conducted by individual 'Casablanca' States against others outside it. Morocco's attempts to isolate Tunisia in the African and Arab worlds because of Tunisia's support for Mauritania is a good example. The fact also that the Brazzaville States (Communauté and ex-Communauté) tend to be dismissed as 'colonialist agents' is discouraging. There is little convincing evidence that Casablanca resolutions on subjects other than the obvious ones like Algeria, South Africa and the Sahara tests, will be implemented in unison.

This, however, is to take a very limited view of the Conference. Immediate results are not the most obvious features of 'Summits' anywhere. What is important is that the Casablanca States represent for the moment the pace-makers of Africa and Asia, especially on the specific issue of the Congo. Such a group of States will always exist, though its composition may vary. Clearly, for instance, Indonesia should be numbered with the 'militants' today, and tomorrow there may be others; while today's 'militants' may be tomorrow's 'moderates'. Their views are important, for they provide a magnet for militants all over Africa and Asia. The Pan-African emphasis on the oneness of Africa will perpetuate this focus, whether it is on Accra or Addis Ababa, Cairo or Dar-es-Salaam.

The militant—you might even say revolutionary—attitude will centre from time to time on specific problems which affect Africans and Asians in particular. The danger to Pan-Africanism —and the Bandung spirit—is that these problems will divide African and Asian nations rather than unite them. So far the Congo crisis has produced just that danger. There exist at present three more or less defined blocs in Africa and Asia, each with its own approach to the problem: the Casablanca powers, with an ideological, 'Africanist' view; the Brazzaville States, with a discreetly pro-Western bias; and the large loose remainder of States, like Nigeria, Tunisia, Ethiopia and India, who are approaching the problem more or less pragmatically. This may be the pattern for some time to come, though the composition of these groups will remain, as it is, flexible, variable and overlapping. It seems likely at any rate that the Congo situation has strained the ideal of African unity almost to breaking-point, if the convening of semi-exclusive gatherings like Casablanca and Brazzaville are anything to go by. If so, that ideal will not be the least significant casualty of the Congo disaster.

Casablanca
MOROCCO
TUNISIA
ALGERIA
Provisional Govt.
LIBYA
EGYPT
U.A.R.
SP. SAHARA
MAURITANIA
MALI
NIGER
TCHAD
SUDAN
FR. SOMALI
SENEGAL
GAMBIA
PORT. GUINEA
GUINEA
UP. VOLTA
DAHOMEY
TOGO
NIGERIA
ETHIOPIA
SIERRA LEONE
IVORY COAST
LIBERIA
GHANA
C. AFRICAN REP.
CAMER-OUN
SP. GUINEA
GABON
CONGO REP.
CONGO
UGANDA
KENYA
SOMALILAND
Brazzaville
TANGANYIKA
FED. OF
ANGOLA
RHODESIA & NYASALAND
MOZAMBIQUE
SW. AFRICA
BECHUANA LAND
MADAGASCAR
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA
CASABLANCA BLOC
BRAZZAVILLE BLOC

THE BRAZZAVILLE TWELVE

HELLA PICK

A frequent contributor on French-speaking African Affairs to 'The Guardian' and the British Broadcasting Corporation

BARRING a few exceptions—some honourable in the sense that, like Sierra Leone, they will soon cease to be an exception; other dishonourable, like Angola and Spanish Guinea, whose overlords show no signs of self-removal—West and Equatorial Africa are now independent. The start of the Pan-Africanist race, however, has been ragged. Though there are such combinations as the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union, and the 'Entente' of the Ivory Coast, Niger, Upper Volta and Dahomey, deep divisions appear to have developed between independent African countries. Many have taken sides by joining either the Casablanca or the Brazzaville Group, while the remainder still sit on the stands, watching with disapproval, and have so far been either unable or unwilling to induce a greater unity of purpose or policy among all the independent African States.

These, though, are early days, and it is impossible to know whether the present divisions in independent Africa will deepen; whether the dream of African unity will be shattered or whether it still has a chance of fulfilment, and in what shape. To begin with, it is easy to exaggerate the depth of the present divisions. There is a tendency to attach fashionable labels to the Brazzaville and Casablanca Groups. To one school of thought the Brazzaville Group seems pro-Western, rational and practical in its approach to international affairs and the problems of African unity; while the Casablanca Group is fellow-travelling, if not actually Communist, and full of unrealisable ideas about African unity. From another standpoint, the Casablanca Group is the true expression of independent Africa, determined to be neutralist in its external relations, and firm in the conviction that for the furthering of unity among African States, the political kingdom has clear priority over the economic. This school considers the Brazzaville Group a sort of front-organisation for French neo-colonialism, and argues that the Group's members have achieved little more than a paper independence. The truth lies somewhere beyond all these assertions, and it is certainly open to doubt whether there are at the present time such fundamental divisions of

political philosophy or political allegiance in Africa as to preclude eventual co-operation, if not actual unity.

The whole history—if a few months' existence merits such a description—of the Brazzaville and Casablanca Groups shows that they were formed and developed to deal with two specific problems: two major ones, Algeria and the Congo; and a minor one, Mauritania. Other questions, such as economic links, political ties, and even defence agreements have come to be considered by the Groups; but the two major points of focus, around which the two Groups developed, are undoubtedly Algeria and the Congo. If these two running sores can be cured quickly enough—and speed is a vital element—then there is an excellent chance that independent Africa's present divisions will not be perpetuated. No doubt there are those who will claim that differences over Algeria and the Congo arose only because of already existing and deep-seated doctrinal differences. They may well be right; though I personally believe that the frontiers of ideas in independent Africa are still loose and flexible, and that there is every possibility of mutual accommodation, provided representative African governments can be established in Algeria and the Congo before the tussle for footholds in Africa by the great powers becomes more predatory.

The so-called Brazzaville Group was formed in October 1960 —its first Heads-of-State meeting was at Abidjan in the Ivory Coast, and only its second meeting was held at Brazzaville, the city from which the Group derived its name. Its 12 members are all French-speaking States. Eleven of them are former French colonies—Senegal and Mauritania; the Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Niger and Dahomey, all in West Africa; Tchad, Gabon, the Central African Republic and the Congo Republic (Brazzaville) from Equatorial Africa; and finally, the somewhat reluctantly recruited island of Madagascar, whose President did not attend the inaugural meeting but went to Brazzaville. The twelfth member of the Group is not a former French colony; but something very close—namely a former French-administered U.N. Trust Territory—the Cameroun. The original meeting of the Group at Abidjan was organised by M. Felix Houphouet-Boigny, President of the Ivory Coast. And he made no bones about it: he wanted a meeting to discuss whether the independent African States could mediate or in some other way help bring the Algerian conflict to an end without alienating France. Indeed, this hope that the Algerian conflict can be brought to

an end without alienating France, and indeed the belief that this is the best and quickest way of bringing the conflict to an end, has been the cornerstone of M. Houphouet-Boigny's approach to the Algerian problem, and helps to explain why he has always refused to give all-out support to the F.L.N.

For weeks before the Abidjan meeting, M. Houphouet-Boigny had been feeling his way. There were rumours of contacts with President Bourguiba of Tunisia, and of a motion on Algeria which the Ivory Coast was drafting for the U.N. General Assembly. At the Nigerian independence celebrations at the beginning of October, Houphouet discussed his idea for a meeting of French African States on Algeria, and there was much coming and going at Houphouet's rooms in the Federal Palace Hotel. Then a few days later, the Senegal Prime Minister, M. Mamadou Dia, came to Abidjan to settle details of the proposed meeting. As with the Casablanca Group, it is not entirely clear who was and who was not invited to the original meeting. Guinea's leaders, for example, vociferously condemned the conference and said they would not attend; but it was never made clear whether they had been invited. Mali, it seems, had received an invitation of sorts; at any rate she was represented by an observer. Togoland had certainly been invited; but M. Sylvanus Olympio, the Prime Minister, made it a condition of his attendance that Tunisia and Morocco should also be at the Abidjan meeting, arguing that it was manifestly useless to discuss the Algerian problem in any kind of constructive way without the two African States who know most about the Algerian problem. But it seems that the two North African States were not invited. In any case, Morocco let it be known that she would not attend even if invited, since she would definitely not sit at the same table as the 'pseudo-Premier of the pseudo-State of Mauritania', who was very definitely attending the conference. There were no North African representatives at Abidjan, and M. Sylvanus Olympio did not appear. Indeed, he has made no move since then to join the Group.

On the other hand the Madagascar President, M. Tsiranana, who declined an invitation to Abidjan, has since become converted to membership. The most Francophile of all the French African leaders, he let it be known at the time of Abidjan that he considered the Algerian problem to be an "internal French matter" and therefore no concern of the French African States. He has not repeated that contention; but doubtless it will not

be forgotten in Africa. It seems that no representative from the Congo (Leopoldville) had been invited; nevertheless, the President of Congo (Brazzaville) turned up with M. Kalonji, sent as an emissary from M. Tshombe.

The Heads of State and of Government—generally they are one and the same person—were for three days closeted at Abidjan. The communiqué which emerged revealed little: there had been "profound examination" of African problems, notably the Algerian, Congolese and Mauritanian questions; all countries present would support Mauritania's application for membership of the United Nations, after the country's proclamation of independence at the end of November; and there would be further meetings. Nothing specific was said about Algeria; but not many days afterwards, M. Mamadou Dia, together with M. Hamani Diori, President of Niger, set off for Tunis and meetings with President Bourguiba and M. Ferhat Abbas, while Leopold Sedhar Senghor of Senegal and Houphouet-Boigny himself set off for Paris.

The communiqué's remarks on Mauritania were, I think, of great consequence. It was undoubtedly one of the factors which prompted Morocco to organise the Casablanca conference, the object of which, in my view, was not merely to discuss Algeria and the Congo from another angle, but to rally support for Morocco's claim to Mauritania as a part of Greater Morocco. As for the Congo, the Abidjan meeting did not at that stage intervene, though its participants were already showing their preference for those opposed to Lumumba.

The next meeting of the Brazzaville Group was held at Brazzaville, capital of the former French Congo, in December 1960. The Group takes its name from this city rather than from Abidjan, scene of its original meeting, because it was confirmed at Brazzaville that the Group had long-term objectives and meant to stay in existence, co-operating on economic problems as well as over external policy. Brazzaville showed that the twelve States who attended the meeting—all those who had been at Abidjan, except the Mali observer (Mali had clearly not been invited on this occasion) and with the addition of Madagascar—all shared a desire to remain friends with the '*ancienne mère patrie*', France; all shared in condemnation of various aspects of Soviet policy and showed no desire to encourage a Communist presence in Africa, through economic help or in any other shape; and all were seeking what were qualified as compromise solutions

to the two burning African problems, Congo and Algeria. All present were united on one other issue; they were opposed to the creation of political links between the independent African States. Though they were all in favour of close co-operation over a wide field of action, they still obstinately stuck to Houphouet-Boigny's old thesis that common political institutions in independent Africa were both wasteful and unnecessary.

Here then were twelve countries—all newly independent, most of them economically weak and greatly in need of external help. All were pro-Western, and none wanted to take the plunge away from French technicians and money which might—according to the Guinea or Ghana leaders—bring them 'real' independence, but which in their own view might leave them at the mercy of the Communist powers. All twelve believed themselves to be realists and wanted to deal with the Congo and Algeria problems not on the basis of preconceived ideas of what was right or wrong, but on what was possible. Certainly the Brazzaville Group now claims that the opening of negotiations between France and the F.L.N. has been made possible largely by their intervention. As for the Congo, the Brazzaville Group has made no claims of any sort; but then nobody else can claim to have contributed much to the improvement of a situation which obstinately refuses to be improved.

The Brazzaville meeting again took place behind tightly closed doors. Apart from discussions amongst themselves, the participants "questioned" a long string of Congolese leaders who had been summoned to Brazzaville. They included M. Kasavubu and M. Tshombe, both of whom were received with 'Presidential' honours; M. Kalonji, from South Kasai; M. Sendwe; and M. Justin Bomboko, who was at that time head of Mobutu's College of Commissioners, and who was not then as outspokenly anti-Lumumbist as he has since become. M. Kashamuru, later installed in Kivu, sent an emissary who was reckoned to be there as a Lumumbist representative. Lumumba himself was at that time under U.N. 'guard' in Leopoldville, and no one more closely associated with M. Lumumba appeared in Brazzaville. Mobutu, who had been asked to cross the river and present himself to the inquisition of his equals or betters, failed to arrive.

No witnesses were called to talk on Algeria; but M. Mamadou Dia, the Senegal Prime Minister, had only just returned from the United Nations, where debate of the F.L.N. sponsored

motion—calling amongst other things for a U.N. controlled and organised referendum—was just beginning. At New York, Mamadou Dia had spoken on behalf of the Brazzaville Group and had made clear that the twelve countries would oppose a U.N. referendum, not because they were against international supervision, but because they felt that the motion would amount to condemnation of France and would therefore make it even more difficult for negotiations between the Algerian nationalists and the French Government to begin. When M. Mamadou Dia arrived in Brazzaville, he told his colleagues that those Afro-Asian countries who wholeheartedly support the F.L.N. had been making a determined propaganda assault on the various delegations of the Brazzaville twelve, and that the preliminary voting clearly showed that there were waverers in the Group. Immediate instructions went out from Brazzaville to ensure that the representatives of the twelve would all vote together when it came to the final resolution. The instructions were obeyed, and the paragraph in the General Assembly resolution demanding a U.N. organised referendum had finally to be withdrawn, since it was clear that it would not obtain a two-thirds majority. On the other hand, a Brazzaville Group sponsored motion calling for immediate negotiations on a cease-fire in Algeria and the organisation of a referendum, together with the establishment of an international commission to safeguard the negotiations, was heavily defeated. During the debate much ill-feeling was expressed by Guinea, Ghana and other African States who deplored the Brazzaville Group's failure to stand wholeheartedly behind the F.L.N. and castigated its members as French lackeys. The Brazzaville Group, however, continues to maintain that its stand in the United Nations has done much to create the climate in France which enabled General de Gaulle to throw out feelers for negotiations with the F.L.N. soon after Christmas.

The communiqué which emerged from the Brazzaville meeting in December was much longer than the Abidjan communiqué. In a sense it constitutes a charter for the Group. It has lengthy preambles about the need for peace, for national construction and international co-operation. The first major point in the communiqué refers to Algeria. There must, it says, be peace in Algeria in 1961. France must put an end to the war, and the Algerians be given the right to self-determination. (This item has been variously interpreted; but it is generally believed that the Brazzaville Group has made it clear that it could not continue

to support France, if Algeria were not established as an independent nation in 1961). The Group showed clearly that it feared Communist help to the Algerian nationalists.

The communiqué proclaimed the belief of the Group that a political solution to the Congo could be found at a round-table conference representative of all political parties. The twelve had urged the Congolese visitors to their meeting to arrange such a conference, and Kasavubu and Tshombe had indeed promised to organise one for mid-February. Whether the Brazzaville Group actually urged the Congolese President to invite M. Lumumba to the round-table conference has never been clear, but it is quite obvious that the Brazzaville leaders are not all as single-minded in their support of M. Kasavubu or in their opposition to the Lumumbists as is one of their number—the Abbé Youlou Fulbert, President of the Congo (Brazzaville). All were, however, unquestionably united in denouncing a "new form of colonialism" which consisted of rival blocs trying to recolonise the Congo "either directly or indirectly or through the intermediary of some Asian and African countries". Once again, the Brazzaville Group's suspicion of the Soviet Union and of any African country which appeared to be supporting her, had come to the surface.

Next, Brazzaville touched again on the Mauritanian issue. The Soviet Union had vetoed Mauritania's application for membership of the United Nations; but the Brazzaville States gave notice that Mauritania, a member of the Group and a country which had fought a "heroic though pacific battle for its independence", could count on the support of the rest of the Group, who would again sponsor Mauritania's membership of the United Nations.

Finally, the Brazzaville communiqué dealt with long-term co-operation among its members. A detailed agenda was set down for the economic study group which met in Dakar at the end of January, and which agreed on a permanent Inter-State Economic Secretariat, as well as other forms of economic co-operation. It was decided that the Group would meet again on March 15th at Yaounde in the Cameroun Republic, where among other matters a mutual defence pact was to be discussed. M. Houphouet-Boigny's own party organ, '*Fraternité*', described the Brazzaville meeting as the birth of a new bloc, formed according to a formula long advocated by M. Houphouet-Boigny and devoted to peace and brotherhood. It was clearly not

intended to be exclusive, and would be open to other like-minded States. Incidentally, it is worth noting that by no means all the members of the Brazzaville Group are inside the French Community, and indeed M. Houphouet-Boigny has made it clear that he has no intention of joining it. The Group is in theory at any rate open to English-speaking countries in Africa. The reason why Brazzaville has got off to a relatively united start, however, would appear to be not merely that its members all share certain attitudes to inter-African relationships and to external policy, but also that they all speak French and have shared a common colonial past.

The Casablanca Group's cohesion is perhaps threatened more than Brazzaville's by the differences in 'background' between its members. One of them, Ghana, belongs to the English-speaking group of territories in Africa; Guinea and Mali both have the common background of colonies within the French West African complex, and of political development inside the *Rassemblement Démocratique Africain*; Morocco and Libya are both monarchies, whose internal policies can scarcely be considered progressive; and finally the United Arab Republic stands even more squarely in the Arab rather than the African tradition than Morocco. Undoubtedly Algeria and the Congo were the motive forces in bringing these countries together at the Casablanca conference. Membership of the Afro-Asian Group at the United Nations had shown them that they shared common views on these two issues, and what is more that they were all opposed to the pro-Western and 'un-African' attitude which the Brazzaville Group had adopted. They wanted to counter Brazzaville's threat to the cohesion of the Afro-Asian Group, while Morocco itself took the initiative in organising the conference because it wanted also to rally support for its claims to Mauritania. The conference had long been rumoured; invitations were finally sent out after the Brazzaville Group had wrecked the F.L.N. sponsored motion at the U.N. and after it had thrown out its second challenge on Mauritania.

Casablanca confirmed, as was only to be expected, that this particular Group supported, above all else, M. Lumumba—and what he stood for—in the Congo, and the F.L.N. in Algeria. Indeed Casablanca virtually gave the F.L.N. *carte blanche*—which, in the weeks following Casablanca, meant a far less belligerent policy towards France than certain members of the Casablanca Group might themselves have advocated.

The political charter at the beginning of the Casablanca communiqué goes considerably beyond the few platitudes expressed in the Brazzaville communiqué. It shows that the Casablanca powers, in contrast to the Brazzaville ones, do believe in the desirability of political links. But are they really all ready to do something about it? The charter itself represents a compromise between Dr. Nkrumah, who wanted rapid tackling of this objective, and others who paid lip-service to the idea without showing any willingness to give up one real iota of political sovereignty. Because of the emphasis on political links, Casablanca, even though it set up an economic committee, still seems far from envisaging the same kind of economic co-operation on which the Brazzaville Group appears to be embarking.

Comparisons between the two Groups are, of course, inevitable. But, it would be a great mistake to indulge in over-classification. Both were formed under the impetus of specific issues, where various countries happened to find themselves in opposite camps. If there are settlements in the Congo and Algeria, then the Casablanca Group may well lose its present cohesion. On the other hand, the Brazzaville Group—if its members succeed in working together—may well find that economic ties do after all lead precisely to those political links which M. Houphouet-Boigny has always deprecated. In the end perhaps, there may yet be a place in the same firmament for Guinea and for the Ivory Coast. Again, the disillusion of the 'Entente' States with France may grow if France continues to oppose, as she does at the time of writing, the kind of co-operation agreements for which these four countries have asked. In that case, some of these Brazzaville countries may stop seeing Communist 'manipulation' in every move made by the Casablanca powers. . . . The trump cards may yet come to be played by those independent African States which have so far kept their distance from the two Groups, but which are nevertheless equally concerned with such matters as the Congo and Algeria, and which also seek greater African unity on the political and the economic plane. They have by no means disassociated themselves from the mainstream of African politics: they are not only actively pursuing their own policies on Algeria and the Congo, but are also preparing for what they consider the right moment to issue a rallying cry to those who believe in African unity. When they do make the call, there may well be answers from countries in both the Brazzaville and the Casablanca Groups.

A PROFILE OF ZANZIBAR

TONY HUGHES
East African Journalist

EVERYONE outside of Zanzibar calls Zanzibar a joke; a fairy-tale, pantomime caricature of a colony, with an Arabian Sultan to provide the pomp and pageantry and a British Resident to wield all the power.

From 1890, when the United Kingdom exchanged Zanzibar with Germany for Heligoland, the territory remained a stagnant political backwater. By the end of the First World War the old Arab social and economic organisation, based upon slavery, was largely destroyed. (Although the dhows which sail up to the Persian Gulf and the Hadramaut with the trade winds are said still to carry an occasional consignment of slaves with their other traditional cargoes.)

In its place the clove growing industry has developed and now accounts for 85 per cent. of the total exports. The territory's only other sources of income are derived from coconuts and from tourists in search of the exotic.

It is difficult to take seriously a nation whose economy depends upon the aromatic smoking habits of the Indonesians and the apple-pie customs of the spiceless British.

The affable 80-year-old Sultan who died last year, had all the trappings of sovereignty, but power passed to the British when they placed his predecessor on the throne.

He lived in an icing-sugar white palace on Zanzibar's water-front and drove through the town in specification-built Rolls Royces and Bentleys, painted bright red.

If His Highness ever passed you on his evening drive through the alleyway which is Zanzibar's Main Street, the best thing to do was to jump into the nearest doorway for road safety and bow low for courtesy. In return you were sure of a happy smile and a jolly wave.

For the old man's eightieth birthday in 1959, they brought over the escort vessel which is the largest third of the Royal East African Navy, and from somewhere they borrowed some marines and four jets for the day. In the evening there was a water-borne fireworks display in the harbour. The barge caught fire.

The Sultan, who was brought up as a Prince in an absolutist

slave-owning society, had obviously had great difficulty in adapting himself to changed conditions. As one politican commented to me on my last trip, "Reducing His Highness to a constitutional monarch is just about the one thing we can thank the British for." His middle-aged son who succeeded him has less prestige and is likely to prove far more manageable.

The British, who fill all the upper ranks of the Civil Service, live in a world which most people believe disappeared when the Raj left India.

Work at the Secretariat (a former palace, still known as the House of Wonders) begins about eight in the morning. There are complicated arrangements for taking a breakfast break, so it is best to arrive at ten if you have any business with a senior official. There is time for coffee, perhaps, then a drink before lunch at the Club. And that is the end of the working day.

During the fiasco over United States rocket tracking stations last July, the Nationalists alleged that Zanzibar was being dragged into the Cold War by the establishment of such stations on the island. As a result one project was removed to what was considered a more secure site in Southern Rhodesia.

The day the story broke, frantic cables passed between London and Washington. Moscow and Peking, overjoyed at yet another Western blunder, quickly collaborated to send out a stream of radio and press propaganda. But, according to reports, the Zanzibar Chief Secretary was not available for comment that day. After all, it was past midday when the whole affair exploded. He was out in the harbour, sailing.

All this would be merely funny if it did not involve the lives of 300,000 people. For most of its colonial rule, Britain has been solely concerned with removing slavery and the slave trade and with providing minimal administration.

Only in the past decade has there been any major effort to diversify the economy, to encourage co-operatives and to bring the mass of the people into the cash economy. For Zanzibar shares Africa's common curse: low productivity subsistence farming. Most of the island's inhabitants are peasant farmers like those on the mainland. Economic production is mainly in the hands of the Arabs, and they in turn are often in the financial control of the merchant Indian community.

Not until 1926 did Zanzibar have Executive and Legislative Councils; and then, of course, there were no members of the majority community, the Africans, in either. A few nominated

members were appointed from time to time, but Zanzibar had to wait for 31 years before it saw elections to Legco.

The Legislative Council (Elections) Decree of 1957 provided for the election of six of the twelve unofficial members, who made up under half of the chamber. Voting was for men only and there were the usual educational/property/income qualifications of colonial rule.

The immediate result was a shock for the Arabs. The Nationalist Party (Z.N.P.), which had grown from the political wing of the Arab Association, fought all six seats but won none. This should not have been so much of a surprise, since the election was fought on racial lines and four-fifths of the population is African.

Because of the large concentration of Indians in the commercial quarter of Zanzibar Town, the seat there was won by the Muslim Association, an Asian body. The five remaining seats were won by the Afro-Shirazi Party (A.S.P.).

The next result was apparently a shock for the government. The signs scrawled on the walls were no longer merely those expressing monarchist loyalty. "God Bless His Highness, Our Beloved Sultan" had to find room between "Uhuru 1960" and "Freedom Now". The Administration complained that by granting elections they had created a political Frankenstein.

In his report for 1958, the Police Commissioner attributed the increase in crime to the fact that his men were too busy keeping watch at political functions to attend to their proper duties. "The main problem," he wrote, "was to keep the peace in the face of ever growing racial antagonism between the main political parties".

The Senior Commissioner reported:

"Traders, cultivators, labourers, fishermen, even housewives, were affected. Villagers in the rural areas argued among themselves. Funerals and religious ceremonies were boycotted by rival political parties. Women even pawned their clothes in order to raise the bus fare to political meetings. Such was the result of the first common roll elections for these formerly peaceful islands."

In spite of this, the government has now decided to step up the pace. It has realised that the dangers of fomenting political strife are to be preferred to the greater risks of delay.

In March 1960, Sir Hilary Blood was appointed as Constitutional Commissioner and asked to make recommendations

for political advance. He proposed that only three ex-officio members—the Finance, Law and Chief Secretaries—should remain in Legco. The British Resident should stay as President of the Executive Council, but a Chief Minister should lead the government in Legco. He proposed that Legco should contain 21 elected members, from single-member constituencies, all elected on a common roll. There would then be up to five nominated members and the three official Ministers.

His proposals were adopted with the—as it subsequently turned out—extremely significant alteration of an additional elected seat, to make the even number of 22 elected members. Elections were set for January 1961.

Since the last election, there had been a split in the Afro-Shirazi Party, and as a result the election was fought by three main groups, the Zanzibar Nationalist Party, the Afro-Shirazi Party and the Zanzibar and Pemba People's Party.

The divisions are based upon partly mythical racial groupings. The longest established Africans claim descent from invaders who came from the Persian city of Shiraz in the eighth century. An Arab, except for those whose two parents came from the North, is anyone who thinks he is. Colour and bone structure don't seem to matter. Africans are those who belong to strict tribal groupings and newcomers from the mainland.

In fact, of course, given Islam's lack of a colour bar, it is impossible for anyone whose family has been in the territory for more than a couple of generations to claim pure descent. This is true of the Sultan himself.

The A.S.P. was formed by the amalgamation of the African and Shirazi Associations, but had suffered a number of splits since it won the 1957 election. Sheikh Abeid Karume, a thoughtful but unsophisticated middle-aged man, usually dressed in the traditional African costume of the Coast, continues to lead the A.S.P. from a hut in the African quarter.

The main split in the party came when Sheikh Muhammed Shamte broke away to form the Zanzibar and Pemba People's Party. It began as a Pemba body and tends to represent the more traditional "Shirazi" view. It is difficult to know how much of the split was due to personalities, especially as the two parties rarely choose to disagree on broad political issues. The Z.P.P.P. made a show of objecting to Sir Hilary Blood's proposals, but when it came to the Legco debate was not very explicit about what it was opposed to in them.

The A.S.P. welcomed the Blood Report *in toto* and said it was just what the people of Zanzibar wanted. "I have not met one man outside Legco who is not satisfied with it," said Sheikh Abeid Karume in the debate, speaking through an interpreter. He is accused by the Nationalists of being in the pay of the government and of the Indian merchants.

The Z.N.P., on the other hand, is accused by the other parties and by the government of being a tool of international Communism.

Sheikh Ali Muhsin, West-educated, who lives in a modern house with several servants, leads the Z.N.P. He numbers Nkrumah and Nasser among his friends.

He agrees that fifteen leading members of his party have recently been on a trip to Peking. "When we accepted scholarships in Cairo we were accused of being Nasserists," he says, "and now our people are going to China we are called Communists. If we are offered education in America tomorrow, we shall accept it—and no doubt they will then call us imperialist lackeys."

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ELECTION POSTSCRIPT

ABDUL RAHMAN (BABU) MOHAMED

Secretary-General of the Zanzibar Nationalist Party

THE General Election which took place on 17th January 1961 resulted in 10 seats for the Afro-Shirazi Party, 9 seats for the Zanzibar Nationalist Party and 3 seats for the Zanzibar and Pemba People's Party. A petition has been lodged with the High Court over the Chake seat in Pemba, where an Afro-Shirazi candidate was returned with a majority of one vote. In the meantime attempts by each of the major parties to form a government with the help of the Z.P.P.P. have resulted in stalemate, for a split took place among the Z.P.P.P. Elected Members when one of them decided to support the Afro-Shirazi Party. The President and the other Elected Member, however, stood firmly by the resolution of a Z.P.P.P. delegate's conference held at Wete, Pemba, on Sunday 22nd January, which instructed them to support the Z.N.P. in the Legislative Council.

To resolve the deadlock and save their own party from cleavage, the Z.P.P.P. held another conference on 28th January, attended by 80 delegates, and proposed a three-party government, with a Z.P.P.P. Chief Minister and Assistant Minister—the A.S.P. and Z.N.P. to have two Ministries each, and each of the three parties to recommend one person for the three nominated seats. If either of the two major parties were to reject these proposals, a two-party coalition would be formed with the other. The Z.N.P. accepted the proposal, in the belief that it might save the country from further confusion; the A.S.P. has at the time of writing not agreed even to discuss the matter with Z.P.P.P. delegates.

The stalemate continued, until on 11th February the Administration finally decided to hold new general elections, probably during the first week in June.

In order to understand how inter-party rivalry could have become so bitter as to have resulted in the virtual postponement of effective responsible government in Zanzibar, one must go back to the 1957 elections, which established the A.S.P. as the 'majority' party, with 5 out of the 6 elected seats in the Legislative Council. It had campaigned on an extremely moderate platform; and indeed the party can be said to have been considerably helped by the Administration itself, if the following

extract from the British Government's report on the election can be taken as an authority: "The immediate result (of the Nationalists' campaign) was a series of urgent appeals to the Elections Office from the leaders of the African and Shirazi Associations for protection against what they claimed to be an attempt to extinguish opposition and to establish a single party supremacy of a dangerously familiar kind. . . . The intervention of the Elections Office, which undoubtedly encouraged the African and Shirazi Associations to pursue the independent line which they had already marked out for themselves, was bitterly resented by the Nationalist Party leaders as deliberately designed to discredit their party." The author of this report is no longer employed in the Colonial Service.

In any event, all the propaganda resources both of the Administration and of the settler-controlled Zanzibar press were mobilised against the Z.N.P. The main bogey conjured up was that of the unspeakable Colonel Nasser, for the wounds of Suez were still fresh. The Z.N.P. was said to be backed by the Egyptians.

Our policy in the election campaign was one of non-racialism and socialist transformation. We opposed racialism very strongly, while equally opposing the 'multi-racialism' expounded by the settlers on the mainland. The Afro-Shirazi Party was described as an 'African' party by the press simply because it was considered by both Government and settlers to have a pro-British bias; the Z.N.P., on the other hand, was dismissed as an 'Arab' party—an attempt to isolate it from the national liberation movements on the mainland as representing a foreign, or minority, interest.

The attempt to impose racial politics on Zanzibar at that time succeeded, and the Z.N.P. was defeated without the consolation of a single seat. But the party emerged with all the more vigour from the elections, convinced only that the results were an indication of how hard it would have to work in order to spread progressive ideas and raise the political consciousness of the population. The three years since then have been used to reorganise the party, and to embark on a great campaign of mass education. Mass rallies and demonstrations revealed that political action can be as effective outside the Legislative Council as in it; and perhaps our main achievement was our campaign against the establishment of an American rocket base in Zanzibar. The Administration was forced to abandon its 'Project Courier' and

we found ourselves tagged with a new label. We had become 'Communists'.

A vast propaganda campaign was launched against the Z.N.P. before the 1961 elections. Some of the politicians from the mainland even took a hand in engineering the party's defeat, because the Z.N.P. had taken a strong stand against the idea of an East African Federation before complete political and economic independence. A famous mainland leader sent an experienced party worker to assist the A.S.P. in its election campaign, in spite of the fact that both major parties in Zanzibar are members of the Pan-African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa (PAFMECA).

Thus, when we entered the election, it was confidently believed by our opponents that we would be resoundingly defeated; instead, we lost by one disputed vote. We maintain that the people of Zanzibar have voted for an uncompromising stand against colonialism, against foreign bases on their island, and for radical progress. It is now the task of our party, encouraged by our gains, to organise in order to win at last the real self-determination that we believe to be our right.

THE SEVEN GENERALS— A STUDY OF THE SUDAN

PETER KILNER

Former Editor of the Sudan 'Morning News'

A NEW system of indirect rule is to be introduced in the Sudan. In the words of its creators, the purpose is "to make the people participate in their government". The nearest parallel is the 'basic democracy' of Pakistan. It is democracy by permission—by permission, that is, of the seven generals who control the country. They believe, and in this they are sincere, that imported democratic systems are unsuited to the Sudan and something special, something original, must be evolved; but they have found little enthusiasm for their new plans. After two years of dictatorship, their opponents are disgusted that the soldiers have not gone back to their barracks as so often promised; the townsmen, the educated element of Sudanese society, are heartily sick of arbitrary arrest, suppressed opinion, police informers, a controlled press and all that goes with a 'state of emergency'; the administrators, viewing events more dispassionately, see the new scheme as a return to the 1930's, their own powers and their gradual planning of local government equally thrown aside to make way for military authority stronger and more restrictive of liberty than any possessed by British governors in the past. All in all, there is an air of profound gloom about the future.

Yet only five years ago, when Sudan's flag was first hoisted, this seemed a most promising country for the development of democracy. All the necessary attributes were present; a reasonably stable economy with good prospects for advancement, an efficient and uncorrupt civil service, respect for the law, a deep determination to make a success of independence and, most important of all, leadership. In addition there were government and opposition front benches both with experience of rule, so that even Westminster-style parliamentary democracy—not often an easily-assimilated import—seemed workable. What then went wrong? Is dictatorship more suitable to the Sudanese than parliament, direct rule more capable of coping with their problems than democracy? What, too, are the prospects today?

Before surveying the politics of the last five years or attempting to map the future, it is best to describe three basic features of the Sudan. First, of the eleven million Sudanese, the bulk are politically apathetic and unconcerned over who is Prime Minister, be the name Azhari, Abdullah Khalil or Abboud; rather over half are subsistence cultivators or cattle-keepers, and of the rest, the concern of many is limited to the local marketing of their export crops.

Secondly, there has been next to no argument among the various post-independence governments on how to spend the country's money. The Sudan economy is heavily dependent on the sale of the one crop which its soil, climate and water supply make profitable—long-staple cotton. Its sale depends on world market conditions and on the rise and fall in prosperity of the high-quality cotton industry. On cotton sales the Sudan is utterly dependent, not only for the foreign currency needed to buy abroad but also, through government participation in the Gezira and other cotton plantations, for development funds. Thus it is axiomatic that any Sudan government seeks to sell the country's cotton at best, to keep traditional markets sweet and extend interest in new markets, to diversify the economy through the growing of new crops, to encourage industries which can use local agricultural products and, through doing all this, to provide the funds to build more schools and hospitals, to bore more wells and construct more dams and canals so that land and people will develop together.

International relations are the third constant factor and here, although basic policy has remained unaltered, emphasis has in the past varied. The Sudan seeks to take a middle-of-the-road position in the world as a whole, in Arab quarrels and in African affairs. Neutralism is dictated as much by economic reasons—the need for cotton markets and the need of foreign aid for development—as political. Neutralism in the Arab world is conditioned by a desire for friendly relations with President Nasser, coupled with deep suspicion of Egyptian intentions and interference, and in Africa by support for freedom movements coupled with a certain antagonism to the headstrong attitudes of African leaders. The Sudan, as a mainly Arab country, has its own 'African' problem in its southern provinces.

To return, with these three factors in mind, to those enthusiastic days at the beginning of 1956 when the Sudan became independent once more, leadership was then provided by Sudan's

first Prime Minister, Ismail El-Azhari. He was the idol of the towns, of the educated, of the fervent nationalists; he had, after earlier using Egyptian connections and Egyptian aid against the British administration and those that had co-operated with it, astutely guided the country to complete independence; he had done so in the teeth of strenuous Egyptian attempts to discredit him, both by political intrigue among his fellow-politicians and by subversion which led to a mutiny and uprising in the southern provinces. He was no longer thought of as a limb, a puppet of Cairo; he had arrived as a truly national leader.

Within two weeks of independence, however, El-Azhari's powers were curbed and in five months he was out of office. From the time of his downfall until the military took power, from the early days of 1956 to November 1958, national enthusiasm, particularly among the civil servants, evaporated, and never again were there to be the cheering crowds in the streets which his leadership had inspired. His downfall was brought about by a conservative reaction, by the backwoodsmen of parliament, by the guardians of the generally apathetic mass of Sudanese, some of whose votes were necessary for any political party or leader to succeed.

The two principal Islamic religious leaders in the Sudan, El-Mahdi and El-Mirghani, had up to the time of independence conveniently backed each one of the two main political parties and provided them with their bulk votes at election-time. El-Mahdi, staunch for independence from the start, had indeed formed his own political party back in 1945, with his son Siddik (the present Mahdist leader) as its President and a former colonel, Abdullah Khalil, amenable both to Mahdist direction and British persuasion, as its Secretary-General; this was the Umma Party. El-Mirghani, on the other hand, had only given the hesitant support of his followers to the more extreme nationalism of El-Azhari and his colleagues, who came together in 1952 as the National Unionist Party. This was in a much truer sense than the Umma a political party, sprung from the earlier nationalism of the Congress movement, and it never blindly accepted the dictates of El-Mirghani. It was never in any real sense El-Mirghani's party, but it was only with Mirghanist votes in the rural areas that it was able to win an election. Early in 1956, El-Mirghani withdrew his already hesitant support from El-Azhari's National Unionists, and El-Azhari was from that time in the political wilderness.

Mahdists and Mirghanists joined together in a coalition under the uninspired leadership of Abdullah Khalil, a coalition which continued until the army took power. It was a coalition of convenience, lacking alike in united purpose and in that kind of leadership which alone could inspire the enthusiasm needed in a new State. Abdullah Khalil was essentially the sound administrator, not the political leader; and of the powers behind him, El-Mahdi failed to offer alternative inspiration and El-Mirghani, through his followers in the Cabinet, played only a watchful role based on suspicion of Mahdist intentions.

An election in February 1958, carefully based on 'one man, one vote' and equal constituencies, efficiently and impartially organised and participated in by a remarkably high percentage of the people, gave the Sudanese and the world outside a strong belief in Sudanese ability to make democracy work. Sadly at the same time, however, it merely confirmed that a majority of voters took their poll decisions on sectarian rather than political grounds. The more sophisticated in the towns and settled areas voted overwhelmingly for El-Azhari; the bulk of the rural population gave their votes unhesitatingly to the quasi-political expressions of the Mahdist and Mirghanist sects. Once again there were three main parties in the new parliament; once again an uneasy coalition, backed by the backwoodsmen, returned to office.

The 1958 election was the turning-point for Sudanese democracy. The continuance of Abdullah Khalil's loose coalition clearly did not provide either the leadership the country needed to face unpopular economic measures or the unity even to initiate them. While a poor economic situation (caused by a world depression in the cotton industry) grew worse, while the two wings of the government quarrelled with each other on attitudes towards Egypt and the West on the surface and on constitutional questions behind the scenes, while the opposition and the press continued to harry the government for its paralysis and inaction, thoughts turned to the alternative. One possibility was a new coalition, between the Mahdists and the opposition National Unionists, a combination of the prestige of El-Mahdi and the popular leadership of El-Azhari. The idea was attractive to many; but the politicians were slow to implement it, and it was only early in November 1958 that agreement was reached.

The alternative favoured by the then Prime Minister, Abdullah Khalil, was of another sort. He could have no place in the pro

posed new coalition. He believed it too would be fraught with rivalries. He was highly suspicious of intrigue against him by President Nasser, on whom he put most of the blame for his internal difficulties. He also considered that strong direct rule was what his country needed, and in this view he had the encouragement of the West. Who could provide this firm direct rule? Only the Army. In August 1958 news of a possible *coup d'état* by top officers inspired by Abdullah Khalil leaked out, and a *coup* was averted thanks to the advice of El-Mahdi within the Sudan and of friends outside, notably in Ethiopia. In November 1958, when tempers had grown more heated, when political meetings had been banned and the possible democratic downfall of Khalil's government had been put off by the postponement of parliament, the generals acted and parliament, politicians and the constitution were swept aside. The Sudanese had long since lost confidence in Abdullah Khalil; he had lost confidence in the Sudanese people's ability to find an alternative. This alternative, he believed, had to be provided for them. Parliamentary democracy did not itself fail; one responsible for its proper operation had thrown it aside.

How since then has the Army responded to Sudan's needs for government? The *coup* was planned and conducted not with the consensus of a large number of both senior and junior officers, but by a dozen men at the top. The dangers at first seemed to be that it would be a continuance of Khalil's rule and that the younger officers would not stand for this. Both dangers proved true, and it was a year before the new regime settled down to a more independent viewpoint than that which first inspired it. In that year, from November 1958 to November 1959, there were three *coups*, one of them successful, and in all five officers were executed, eighteen imprisoned and about sixty, including two generals, dismissed. Today supreme control is in the hands of seven generals. Of these the sixty-year-old General Abboud is the outward leader, the father-figure and conciliator; General Hassan Beshir, aged 45, has control of the army and is the leading voice in the Supreme Council; Brigadier Magboul, aged 40, the youngest of the seven, is in charge of the Ministry of Interior. The remaining four are light-weights, and all seven combine with six civilians to form the Cabinet—the civilians being little more than the executors of the Council's policy. Having overcome the internal clashes of the Army, having broken away from Khalilist direction and also reached

agreement with President Nasser on the vexed question of the Nile Waters, having also put the economy on its feet again—thanks to a new boom in the world's cotton industry—the seven generals have now turned to plan for the future.

Originally, when they came to power, there was talk of their staying for only two years at the most. To the disgust and against the protests of Siddik El-Mahdi, El-Azhari and the wide following of these two, the generals have made it clear that they intend to retain power for some time to come. They intend to get their new system of indirect rule on its feet and to initiate a seven-year economic plan next July before considering any return to their barracks. Unless they are pushed out, they may well seek to stay for anything up to the end of these seven years.

The system of indirect rule which they are introducing is one which on paper would seem well adapted to the Sudan's needs and state of development. The posts of district commissioner and provincial governor, together with other aspects of centralised control, will be done away with; and in every district—at present they exist in many, but not all districts—there will be councils responsible for a wide range of public services and also for co-ordinating development projects. At a higher level, there will be provincial councils, having some local legislative power and control over a provincial executive of civil servants; at the top there will be an economic council and a development committee and, perhaps, in the future a central assembly. Were all these bodies to be elected, the system would have in it the seeds of a satisfactory democracy. The snag is that "for the time being" all members, even of local councils, will be nominated by the generals after careful screening, while the chairmen of the provincial councils, who will in effect have near-autocratic powers, will be provincial military commanders. The only immediate result of the new system, much heralded as a great new democratic step, therefore, will be to extend military control much wider and much deeper into the ordinary lives of the Sudanese.

The seven-year economic plan has also little new to offer. What needs to be done is commonly agreed upon by all Sudanese and indeed many of the plans for economic development were laid down long ago by the British administration. What has been lacking is the money to carry them out and, as the money has become available, new productive schemes and new health and education projects have been put in hand. Now all these scheme

and projects have been lumped together and, with the impressive-sounding cost label of £250 million, presented afresh.

What then are the prospects for the Army's continued rule? Their greatest danger is from within the ranks of junior officers, some of whom feel the generals are not doing enough. "Where is the revolution?" they ask. Discipline among these officers has been maintained so far by the dismissal of those not trusted, but this cannot be carried on indefinitely.

On the other hand, the generals have in their support many tribal chiefs who have little interest in politics and, as paid government servants, have duly come to Khartoum to swear their allegiance. A few are genuinely enthusiastic, while the majority merely reflect the apathy of the rural masses. Among the former politicians and the townspeople, and even among the civil servants who are so important an element in ensuring law, order and continuous good government, there is little enthusiasm and much covert opposition.

For two years now, the ordinary basic liberties have been suppressed in the Sudan. That political parties and demonstrations are not allowed under military rule is natural enough. Repression has, however, become all-pervading. The closing down of newspapers, which have avoided anything but the mildest criticism in any case, the careful watch by the police on opinions expressed in public places, the pressures brought on suspected opponents of the regime, the occasional arrests and trials by military courts, the virtual suspension of the rule of law through the operation of a new all-embracing Act which punishes critical words or actions with heavy sentences, the control of the trade unions and now, the latest move, the end of Khartoum University's former independence from government control—all these limits on liberty have spread a growing dislike and discontent which are not off-set by any compensating inspiration to nationalist fervour such as may be found in the United Arab Republic.

No revolt, no nation-wide campaign against military rule seems likely; indeed, with its hot climate and the Islamic patience of its people, such a campaign would be difficult to imagine. However, gone from Khartoum at least is the cheerful atmosphere of free criticism and constructive ideas which many visitors have found so stimulating. As the seven generals lose their initial fervour for reform and sink back into the comfort of office, gloomy acceptance of their rule envelops the capital.

LIBYAN NOTE-BOOK

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It is impossible to remain in Libya for long without realising that the country is in the middle of an oil boom. The hotels are packed with oilmen from seven or eight different countries, oil concession maps are on sale at news-vendors' stalls, and with so many new Libyan companies being registered, plans are being made for the establishment of a bourse to facilitate the buying and selling of shares. All this adds a new dimension to those familiar incongruities of Middle Eastern life also present in Libya: the brand-new buildings on unpaved, undrained streets, the air-conditioned cinemas showing the latest Hollywood films, and the mini-buses full of Bedouin tribesmen. There are signs of building activity everywhere, as blocks of flats and lines of smart villas are hurriedly run up to house the influx of foreign managers and technicians with their families. Libyan companies are doing record business, and new showrooms and offices are appearing all the time. A supermarket was opened in Tripoli last year with a range of goods which few English shops could rival; but with the number of cars on the roads increasing daily, finding a place to park near it has now become a major hazard. Along the coast road which connects Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, a regular stream of lorries and trucks carries stores and equipment to the desert oil camps.

To Libyans this boom is a constant reminder of the rapid way in which their country's oil resources are being developed, and although it will be another year at least before the first oil is exported and even longer before the first sizable revenues accrue to the government, great wealth, with the opportunities this will give for economic advance and a more positive rôle in Arab and world affairs, seems to glitter for many of them from just around the corner. Their enthusiasm is not surprising. For over a hundred years Libya has been little more than the pawn of stronger powers, as Turkish rule was succeeded by Italian invasion and colonisation and then by the Second World War, when the whole country became a battleground over which British and German and Italian forces fought for control of the approaches to the Suez Canal. Even when Libya gained independence in December 1951, it was as a weak, divided country,

artificially created out of two areas with quite different histories and social organisations. It had constantly to try and ensure the good-will—or at least the neutrality—of its more powerful neighbours, and to maintain a delicate balance between the pro-Arab aspirations of a majority of its people and treaty obligations with Britain and America, which provided it with much needed budgetary support in return for the right to certain Libyan bases.

Until oil in great quantities was first discovered in June 1959, Libya seemed destined to remain an exception to the general rule of the Arab world—that the poorer a country, the greater its oil wealth. It had no sources of power, no mineral resources, no skilled labour force, and a population which in 1949 had contained no more than 5,000 people of as much as five years schooling. The majority of its 1,200,000 inhabitants are scattered across an area over half the size of India and make a meagre living out of the cultivation of small patches of insufficiently watered land and the raising of livestock. Droughts are frequent. Infant mortality remains at some 300 out of every 1,000. Many of the hospitals and schools and roads built by the Italians had been destroyed in the war, and their repair together with a limited amount of economic progress continued to depend, as it had always done, on financial assistance from abroad.

The discovery of oil promised Libyans a change in all this. It gave them a new confidence in their country and its future which is now everywhere reflected—in the Libyan press, with its grandiose schemes for industrialisation and economic development, in private discussion, in the National Assembly, and, most noticeably, in the attitude of the Libyan government. This is reflected in the recent decision of the government to wind up the British and American aid agencies, which until 1959-60 had been entrusted with the main work of planning and executing development projects. It is also illustrated by the government's current policy of assisting the 35,000 Italians still living in Tripolitania to return home to Italy, even though this deprives the country of their valuable services as farmers and skilled workers. A law in 1960 re-organised the government's Development Council to allow it to act more purposefully as a central planning agency, and a Libyan five-year plan is now in the process of preparation.

Behind this air of confidence and the government's optimistic declarations of intention, however, a spirit of criticism long

absent from Libyan public life is beginning to show itself. This in large part results from the economic and social dislocations caused through the expenditure of large sums of money by the oil companies on exploration and development well in advance of the revenues needed to mitigate some of its worst effects. In 1958, the last year for which there are any figures, the companies spent £9 million in Libya—total Libyan public expenditure for that year was just over twice that amount—and this sum must have increased considerably since then. One consequence has been a rapid rise in prices (one estimate puts it at between 12% and 15% in 1959) caused primarily by the high level of demand for anything which cannot be freely imported—in particular, locally grown fresh fruit and vegetables and housing of all kinds. With a high minimum wage and skilled labour exceedingly scarce, wages are making their own contribution to inflation; but the salaries of most government servants have lagged behind, leading to the loss of many civil servants to better paid jobs with the oil companies and a marked decline in civil service morale.

Those Libyans with access to capital have made a great deal of money—not surprisingly in boom conditions, with income tax never more than a flat 15% and the rent of houses so high that the cost of building can be regained in three to five years; but meanwhile the gap between rich and poor persistently increases. This is particularly obvious in the suburbs of Tripoli and Benghazi, where the smart new villas built for wealthy Libyans and members of the foreign community are often only a few hundred yards from the shanty towns—shacks put together from branches and discarded tins—in which there live the many thousands who have come into the towns in search of a regular wage and the sustenance which their dried-up fields cannot provide. The municipal authorities are quite unable to cope with the problems of health and housing and employment posed by these new immigrants, and the existence of a discontented, under-employed, predominantly uneducated urban proletariat is a potential source of grave social unrest. Meanwhile, out in the desert, a similar dislocation is being caused by the oil rigs which provide temporary work for the men of a particular area and then move off to another locality, leaving behind workers with basic skills for which there is no longer any use and the memory of the first steady wages in their lives.

It is consequently not surprising that much of the enthusiasm

which greeted the first oil discoveries is already turning to the bitterness of disillusionment. For a majority of Libyans the vast influx of foreigners has led only to the ravages of inflation and a sight of people enjoying a standard of living far in excess of their own. Xenophobia, always near the surface in Libya, is growing, although so far it has been directed mainly against the oil companies and the large American community. Criticism of the government is also beginning to appear more frequently, especially in the press. The previous Cabinet of Abdul Majid Koobar did no more than scratch at the surface of current social problems, partly through lack of funds but more glaringly by its absence of energy and determination, particularly marked during the summer months when—with the Ministers either on holiday or over 700 miles away from Tripoli at Beida, the summer administrative capital—government activity came almost to a standstill. Schemes to provide work and low-cost housing for the slum-dwellers are urgently needed. Yet, when the government has sporadically acted to help them—by restricting, for instance, the entry of certain types of foreign labour in the hope of creating jobs for Libyans—this has only served to aggravate the situation by discouraging foreign investment (people with such skills are just not available in Libya, whatever the government might think) and thus preventing the establishment of enterprises which might absorb surplus labour. The government is also criticised for its inability—some say, unwillingness—to prevent a small number of foreigners, like those able to establish supposedly Libyan trading agencies, from making large profits out of the boom. There is swelling complaint that Libya has not been following an active foreign policy commensurate with its new status as a potential oil producer and continues to do no more than pay lip service to the ideals of Arab nationalism and African unity.

The most potent source of criticism, however, has come from rumours of corruption in government circles. Any government which appears to enjoy the support of certain privileged classes or groups is vulnerable to such charges, and in Libya suspicions have been further raised by the close liaison which has developed between business and the administration as more and more civil servants and politicians leave government service to establish companies of their own. Just how much truth lies behind these rumours is difficult to measure, but they have been given great force by the King's circular in July 1960 denouncing corruption,

which seemed tacitly to admit its existence, and by the Fezzan Road affair, which was undoubtedly the most important Libyan event of last year.

The Fezzan Road was the name given to a project aimed at linking the coast road between Tripolitania and Cyrenaica with Sebha, the capital of Libya's third province, the Fezzan. In 1958 a contract for its construction was awarded to a Libyan company owned by Sayed Abdullah Abed Senussi, a relative of the King. Work proceeded slowly, Sayed Abdullah became more and more unpopular because of his allegedly high-handed ways, and by the summer of 1960, when only a third of the road had been completed, rumours circulated that all the money mentioned in the original estimate of the cost (just under £2 million) had gone and that the government would have to allocate an additional sum (some people said as much as £4 million) to allow construction to proceed. It was also rumoured that the contract had been so loosely worded that the government was legally obliged to provide the extra money. This led directly to successful efforts by a group of Cyrenaican Deputies to secure the support of their Tripolitanian colleagues for the recall of parliament in special session to discuss the Fezzan Road and the circumstances surrounding the award of the contract. Two weeks before the special session met at the beginning of October, the Cabinet attempted to disarm criticism by dropping the Minister of Communications, who had been directly responsible for the award of the contract; but this did not deter the Deputies, and they had all work on the Road stopped, the construction of the remaining two-thirds put out for new tenders, and tabled a motion of censure on the government itself. During the eight days which must constitutionally elapse between the tabling of such a motion and its debate, the Cabinet resigned.

This was an event of great significance, for it marked the first time that parliament had successfully challenged a Libyan Cabinet. It also marked the first time that Tripolitanian and Cyrenaican Deputies had been able to sink their provincial rivalries in a stable political alliance. Important though these developments were, however, it would be wrong to suppose that they will lead to any immediate change in the way the country is governed. The Koobar Cabinet was replaced by one under Muhammad Othman al Said, a Fezzanese, as some sort of recompense to the Fezzan for the temporary suspension of

activity on the road; but, as usually happens in Libya, the new Cabinet contains a majority of members who had served in the old one, so ignoring the principle of collective Cabinet responsibility explicitly laid down in the constitution. Parliament has not been drawn any more closely into the government's confidence, and until it becomes possible to form a political party in the National Assembly—at present all Deputies are independents—government will probably continue to be by royal nominee, and Prime Ministers will still lack either the popular or the parliamentary support to remain in office once they have lost the confidence of the King. Certainly without a change of this kind, it will still be open to the King to continue his intermittent interference in the affairs of the government—to the inevitable detriment of a strong, self-confident central administration.

It would be just as wrong to over-estimate the extent and the depth of the anti-government criticism in parliament and press. On the surface the country remains calm, a reminder that of all the Arab countries, Libya was the only one in which parliamentary government survived the 1950's without *coups d'état* or civil war. The merchants profiting from the oil boom and the businessmen whose low taxes are more-or-less subsidised out of foreign aid are well satisfied with conditions as they are, and Libyan governments have shown some skill in directing their few large public works to Libyan contractors where possible—the first Fezzan Road contract was not put up for tender by foreign companies—and to different parts of the country, so that to some extent benefits have been spread. Stability must also owe something to an efficient police force and the difficulties of organising any kind of concerted opposition in such a thinly-populated, parochially-minded country.

Nevertheless the government will ignore signs of popular discontent only at its peril. The future possession of oil revenues firmly commits Libya to a programme of economic development and the amelioration of social conditions; certainly, if the experience of a country like Iraq is anything to go by, it is by its success in this field that the government will be judged. There are signs that the revenues will be much less than was first supposed, and with various programmes involving heavy government expenditure already launched, the government will have little room to manoeuvre if it is to provide immediate results and at the same time to invest much-needed capital in agri-

culture and education and health. Any sign of failure will undoubtedly be exploited by the small and at the moment not very influential groups of critics, mainly young Libyans educated at foreign universities, whose political feelings are strongly coloured by President Nasser's social and administrative reforms.

What of the future? The government's economic plan for the next five years, soon to be published, will probably stick closely to the suggestions made by the World Bank Economic Survey Mission which visited the country early in 1959. If so, such a plan would be based on two major premises: first, that agriculture must continue to be the main source of employment for the bulk of the population, since it seems unlikely that either oil production or the industries based on it will be able to provide work for more than 5% of the present labour force; and secondly, that Libya has neither the administrative machinery nor the trained personnel to absorb more than the present £5 million which is being devoted to capital investment. Apart from such a plan, however, good use of the oil revenues will also depend on three other very important conditions. In the first place, there will have to be sufficient administrative reform to allow a more efficient central direction of the economy than can at present be possible while each of the three provinces has so much autonomous power. It is typical of Libyan administrative arrangements that Cyrenaica and Tripolitania have different income tax laws. Such anomalies will clearly have to be changed, but this will only be possible by a process of consultation and co-operation. The union of the three provinces is still too new and too fragile to allow any compulsion by the federal government.

Secondly, economic development will need internal stability. How far this can be obtained will depend a great deal on the extent to which popular criticism can be directed through parliamentary and other legal channels. It will also depend on what will happen when the King dies.

Thirdly, and most important of all, it will depend on the government's ability to secure popular interest and co-operation in its development programmes. There is little in Libya's history to show Libyans that their welfare can be improved by their own work and effort; and in the absence of any powerful social dynamic like the concept of 'revolution' or 'nationalism', something is vitally necessary to liberate energies which will otherwise lie dormant.

FOCUS ON AFRICA : THE 15TH U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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THIS was a tense and emotional General Assembly—it is to resume again in March—with the life of the United Nations Organization itself hanging by a hair in the Congo, and Africa all-pervading. Although some 'colonial' items (Apartheid—and the treatment of Indians—in South Africa; the Trusteeship Council Report; Eisenhower's Program for Africa) have been left over till Spring, the completed session chalked up its only important decisions on the colonial board.

World interest in the colonial problem—there are still sixty million people in Africa alone under some form of white domination—was clearly at its height.

In the opening debate by a dazzling array of world leaders, four pre-occupations were apparent: disarmament—as yet barely touched upon; the closing of the economic gap between the haves and the have-nots (possible only with an end to arming); an orderly end to colonialism; and the revision of the U.N. structure so as to reflect its expanded membership. On these inter-related needs, all could agree. The emotion and the sordid wrangling came in the details, the methods, the timing, and in the assessment and suspicion of motives.

The gale that swept from Africa down East Forty-Second Street brought just and welcome representation as well as the stresses of change. 17 new member nations—only Cyprus amongst them is non-African—swelled the independent-African force from 9 to 25, the Afro-Asian group to 46, and U.N. membership to 99.

The African States, however, notably on the Congo issue, divided into groups sometimes intensely bitter against one another. Ghana, Mali, Morocco, Guinea, and the United Arab Republic strongly supported the claims of Lumumba. The new nations of the French Community tended to support France (9 opposed or abstained on the Algeria resolution). The re-

mainder fell between these two alignments, tending to be 'moderate' and independent. The issue of Mauritania—claimed by Morocco, granted independence by France after the U.N. had failed to arrive at any resolution in the matter, and vetoed for membership by the Soviet Union when membership was not granted to Outer Mongolia—caused further friction and divided Tunisia and Morocco. The Cold War had come to Africa, though Africans continued to maintain unity on all other colonial issues.

It was not the Cold War, though, that most concerned the Africans and Asians. 'Neo-colonialism' was the key-note of African pre-occupation, in the Congo and everywhere else. President Nkrumah of Ghana stressed this most forcefully in his U.N. address. The African States fear most of all the retention or development by the West of bases, of military commitments, and of economic interests in Africa. Does Europe really intend to keep Africa weak and divided and dependent? Audible in the U.N. corridors was the feeling in Nigeria against military involvement with Britain; the fear of new bases being set up in Africa, and of nuclear tests conducted there; the vehement distrust of Belgium's role in Katanga and of Western support of Mobutu; the war in Algeria; the intransigence of Portugal, supported by N.A.T.O. votes; the intransigence of South Africa, supported by N.A.T.O. abstentions on South West Africa. There was reason enough for fear, which the United States and colonial power voting record only intensified. If the West is as well-intentioned as it claims to be, it must allay this fear, and quickly.

The '*New York Herald Tribune*' of December 22, 1960, under the headline—"Soviets Seen as Gainers as U.N. Assembly Ends"—reported: ". . . On the issue of debating the admission of Communist China . . . the Soviet bloc mobilized thirty-four votes, which is probably the high Soviet point in U.N. voting history. Some believe it may succeed next year in securing the simple majority required to win a debate on this issue",—against the United States, of course! As Nigeria's far from naïve Mr. Jaja Wachuku, his wings still damp from the colonial cocoon, expressed it on television (I paraphrase): "We understood that a democratic forum was intended to discuss important issues; we found that the question of debating the admission of China was up for a vote, so we voted to discuss it"—to the shock and surprise of many. Truth was certainly on Mr.

Wachuku's side; the nuclear hazard in isolating China apart, it is surely far more dangerous that one nation—the United States—should be able to force a majority against that majority's better judgment than that China and every other nation should be admitted to the U.N. There has been talk here of 'weighting' U.N. votes in future. I cannot see this as a practical possibility either in terms of population or of 'wealth', since little nations are not going to vote themselves into permanent second-class status with their eyes open.

The United States stuck close to N.A.T.O. and abstained on *every* controversial colonial vote in 1960. The year before, in the person of Mr. Mason Sears, it backed the Africans all the way on South West Africa (and in this it persisted—except on one very important resolution—in 1960); previously, in 1958, Mr. George Harrison was responsible for bringing U.S. support at last to the resolution against South African apartheid. The sole point of interest in the otherwise altogether lamentable 1960 record was that the U.S. *delegation* in some instances was almost openly chagrined at the votes it had to cast on State Department directive. This, of course, only made matters worse, for the Afro-Asians. My ears still ring with the reproaches of an ordinarily cordial 'neutralist' delegate, asked to comment on this year's American U.N. performance. He fears that the new American Administration arrives too late—its advent, if promising, has seemed interminable—and I only hope he is not right. 'We used to have reservations when the Soviet Union called you 'imperialists' and 'colonialists','' he said to me bitterly, 'but we count you among them from now on.''

Unless the Rusk-Williams-Stevenson team can very rapidly work some miracles, the United States may really have cooked its turkey in Africa. The folly of the power struggle was never more nakedly exposed than at this General Assembly: the West appeared blinded to the real needs of the world in a way that can only be suicidal.

The Soviet Union probably misjudged majority feeling with the unparliamentary tactics of Mr. Khrushchev and his attacks on the U.N. structure (all small States, of course, want the U.N. to endure). Its refusal to allow broader Afro-Asian representation on the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council—by expanding their membership—until China should be admitted, together with its Mauritania veto were, on the other hand, calculated risks. If these appear debits to balance the score, the

score does not really balance, since Soviet-bloc speeches and votes were strongly in support of African sentiment and were generally welcomed among Afro-Asians. The U.S.S.R. does appear to understand most of the real needs of the world and be ready to adapt to them, wisely or cunningly, depending on your point of view. The votes from now onwards are most likely to swell the side of those who respond best to these needs, regardless of ideology.

The Secretary-General, Mr. Hammarskjöld, managed to defend his Congo policy with skill, but his great value as a peacemaker has been seriously, probably permanently, undermined. Here the West, having allowed Belgium to pursue its ultimately disastrous colonial policies, has only itself to blame. In the face of this proven and catastrophic Congo blindness, the continued myopia of N.A.T.O. is the harder to explain.

The U.N. faced, and still faces, a financial crisis. Contributions to Congo expenses—refused by the Soviet bloc and others—were made "obligatory", and a way was found to meet the ten million dollars a month required until March. The going from there onwards, however, is still in doubt.

The Record

It seems worth while to analyze in some detail the voting on the most important African political issues. The following nations have been chosen as a kind of cross-section: the U.K. and Portugal (N.A.T.O.-colonial); the U.S. and Canada (N.A.T.O.); Ireland (European independent); Ghana and Tunisia ('established' African States); the Ivory Coast (formerly French, newly independent); India (Asian neutralist); South Africa; the U.S.S.R. (and bloc).

COLONIALISM: Mr. Khrushchev presented a Declaration on Colonialism to the General Assembly, which demanded immediate and unconditional independence for all colonies. This was defeated in favour of a 43-nation Afro-Asian resolution urging immediate steps to the same end, but naming no deadline. Passed 89-0-9. YES: Canada, Ghana, India, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Tunisia, U.S.S.R. NO: None. ABSTAIN: Portugal, South Africa, U.K., U.S. (and Spain, Australia, Belgium, Dominican Republic, France).

Mrs. Zelma Watson George, Negro member of the U.S. delegation, rose to her feet and applauded the passage of this

esolution, stating to reporters that she believed her whole elegation wanted to vote for it and that her last-minute appeal o Eisenhower had been fruitless. The U.S.S.R. declared itself ell-satisfied with the outcome and made the most of the U.S. efection ("a handful of colonialists led by the United States"), hich has been sharply criticized by Senator John Sherman ooper, a Republican, and others here.

ORTUGUESE AFRICA: Portugal has repeatedly stated that ne has no colonies, only "overseas provinces"—a big, happy mily. Last year there was majority joy when a U.N. Committee f Six—Netherlands, U.K., U.S., India, Mexico, and Morocco—greed to draw up a set of principles "which should guide lember States" in deciding what were the colonies on which ney had the obligation to report annually to the U.N. A set of velve very adequate principles was produced last September.

Resolution I approved these principles and *decided* that "the rinciples as annexed to this resolution should be applied in the ght of the facts and circumstances of each case to determine hether or not an obligation exists to transmit information . . ." assed 69-2-21. YES: Canada, Ghana, India, Ireland, Ivory oast, Tunisia. NO: Portugal, South Africa. ABSTAIN: U.K., .S., U.S.S.R.

Resolution II pointed to specific Portuguese colonies and *eclared* "that an obligation exists on the part of the Government f Portugal to transmit information . . . concerning these terri-ories . . . without further delay." Passed 68-6-17. YES: Ghana, ndia, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Tunisia, U.S.S.R. NO: Portugal, outh Africa. ABSTAIN: Canada, U.K., U.S.

OUTH WEST AFRICA: Feeling ran equally high on this issue; fteen years of U.N. attention has accomplished nothing for is League of Nations mandate, ward of South Africa. However, n November 4, 1960, Ethiopia and Liberia had brought the se of South Africa's possible violation of her mandate to the nternational Court for a judgment. Eight petitioners were resent (including Michael Scott), some of whom had escaped ne territory under threat of imprisonment. Britain suffered vere and open criticism for her voting record on South West frica; even Ireland's expressed caution over Resolution VI imulated bitter attack.

Mr. Eric Louw's motion to adjourn debate because the matter

was *sub judice* (although he would not commit South Africa to abide by the Court's decision) was defeated 1-67-11 in Committee, 1-82-9 in Plenary. YES: South Africa. NO: Canada, Ghana, India, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Tunisia, U.S., U.S.S.R. ABSTAIN: Portugal, U.K. (*South Africa boycotted the debate after the defeat of this motion.*)

Resolution II urged political freedom in South West Africa, and an end to the political deportation and imprisonment of Africans. Passed 84-0-7. YES: Canada, Ghana, India, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Tunisia, U.S., U.S.S.R. NO: None. ABSTAIN: Portugal, U.K. South Africa not voting.

Resolution III *commended* Ethiopia and Liberia for their Court action. Passed 86-0-6. YES: Canada, Ghana, India, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Tunisia, U.S., U.S.S.R. NO: None. ABSTAIN: Portugal, U.K. South Africa not voting.

Resolution IV *requested* South Africa to seek the assistance of U.N. Specialized Agencies in alleviating conditions within the territory. Passed 89-0-0. South Africa not voting.

Resolution V expressed concern over South West Africa's 'Sharpeville' at Windhoek on December 10, 1959, when 11 Africans were killed by police and many injured. It requested compensation for the Africans and punishment for the guilty. Passed 83-0-7, no roll call.

Resolution VI, reviewing the history of the South West African item, *invited* the U.N. "Committee on South West Africa, in addition to its normal tasks, to go to South West Africa immediately to investigate the situation prevailing in the Territory and to ascertain and make proposals to the General Assembly on: (a) The conditions for restoring a climate of peace and security; (b) The steps which would enable the indigenous inhabitants of South West Africa to achieve a wide measure of internal self-government designed to lead them to complete independence as soon as possible." The Committee was requested to report to the resumed session in the Spring. Passed 78-0-15. YES: Ghana, India, Ivory Coast, Tunisia, U.S.S.R. NO: None. ABSTAIN: Canada, Ireland, Portugal, U.K., U.S. South Africa not voting.

THE CONGO—SEATING THE KASAVUBU DELEGATION: All African States but nine of the formerly French territories opposed or abstained on the resolution to seat the Kasavubu delegation as representative of the Congo central government,

which was widely considered (and resented) as the work of the United States, wielding its safe majority. A Conciliation Commission of African and Asian States had been set up by the earlier—Emergency—Assembly, and feeling was strong that it should have been allowed to do its work in the Congo before any "freezing" of current divisions. The West's fear of 'Communism' in the person of Lumumba over-rode all other considerations, but its premature action may prove an irreversible mistake in an Africa which so strongly distrusts Belgium and identifies Kasavubu at present with Belgium's effort to retain its Congo interests. The Security Council, and later the Assembly, failed to pass any resolution aimed at widening the U.N. mandate in the Congo. For the first time the U.S. could not—by one vote—rally its former sure two-thirds majority for her own (and the U.K.'s) resolution. The Congo item remains on the agenda.

Credentials Committee recommendation for seating Kasavubu: Passed 53-24-19. YES: Ivory Coast, Portugal, South Africa, U.K., U.S. NO: Ghana (Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Togo, U.A.R.), India, U.S.S.R. ABSTAIN: Canada, Ireland, Tunisia. The African States divided 9-6-7, with Upper Volta absent, and Nigeria not voting because of her position as Conciliation Commission Chairman.

ALGERIA: A paragraph *deciding* to hold a U.N.-supervised referendum within Algeria, urged by the F.L.N., was defeated in Plenary after Committee passage. The remainder of the resolution, *recognizing* the right of Algerians to independence without partition, and U.N. responsibility in the matter of self-determination, achieved a two-thirds majority for the first time in three years. (In debate the U.S. and N.A.T.O. were once more considered heavily responsible for enabling France to pursue the war.) Passed 63-8-27. YES: Canada, Ghana, India, Ireland, Tunisia, U.S.S.R. NO: Ivory Coast, Portugal, South Africa. ABSTAIN: U.K., U.S.

RUANDA-URUNDI: This strife-torn, Belgian-administered Trust Territory, bordering on the Congo and due for early independence, was the object of the serious concern of the Afro-Asian States, which summarily rejected all N.A.T.O. amendments to their resolutions.

Resolution I asked for a delay in forthcoming elections and a "full and unconditional" political amnesty, and set up a three-

nation commission closely to supervise the elections and the progress of the territory. Passed 61-9-23. YES: Ghana, India, Ivory Coast, Tunisia, U.S.S.R. NO: Portugal, South Africa, U.K. ABSTAIN: Canada, Ireland, U.S.

Resolution II asked the return of the exiled Mwami (King) of Ruanda to his country, his future status to be the subject of a referendum. Passed 50-24-19. YES: Ghana, India, Ivory Coast, Tunisia, U.S.S.R. NO: Canada, Portugal, South Africa, U.K., U.S. ABSTAIN: Ireland.

PORTUGAL FOR SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT: The most gratuitously disturbing move of the season was the West's effort to give Portugal a seat on the Security Council. Voting was by secret ballot, and a two-thirds majority was required; on the final ballot on which she appeared (the ninth), Portugal received 46 votes! Under pressure, one presumes, she withdrew then in favour of Ireland, and Ireland deadlocked with Liberia 45-45 on the thirteenth ballot. The two candidates then agreed that Liberia should serve in 1961 and Ireland in 1962. "Why did the West choose this of all years to support Portugal?" a young African student asked me. I only wish I knew.

The Future

So that was the broad picture. Of course the West does not want to see the Soviet Union gaining ascendancy in Africa, though it could hardly do better than it is doing at present if it planned such a future as a matter of policy. Free and sovereign States must be treated as free and sovereign States, not as trenches in the Cold War. May one respectfully submit to the new United States Administration that "We must stop the Communists at every point in Africa" is just no substitute for a sound Africa policy? The N.A.T.O. alliance must be seriously re-appraised. Is not the friendship and trust of all Africa, Asia, and South America the greater bulwark today? The most crucial foreign policy decision which the United States has now to make is to stand on what we claim so strenuously to believe; to offer the new Africa—and Asia and South America—co-operation in their enormous social, economic, and political needs *as they see them*, not paranoiac pressures against an "enemy" ideology; world-mindedness, not blind battle fever; the forces that build, not those which destroy.

WEST AFRICAN POETRY

DAVIDSON NICOL

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THE three European languages used along the West Coast are French, English and, to a much lesser extent, Portuguese. There are probably at least twenty-five African languages, of which the most widely used is Hausa. Hausa, however, is mainly the language of the Northern territories and the fringe of the Sahara, while the literate peoples are chiefly at present on the coast-line. Their commonest means of communicating ideas are accordingly French and English or the patois of these two languages. It is understandable therefore that most anthologies of West African poetry are in European languages, either as translations or as the originals written by literate and educated Africans.

The accident of history determined to what European power a nation was assigned. So that within the past hundred years, the Woloff have been Gallicised and the Yoruba Anglicised. How deeply down does this go and how much is the indigenous talent smothered? Some, casting an eye on the former German colonies, might be tempted to say that Europeanisation was superficial since there are not many Togolanders or Cameroonians who demonstrate any great attachment to Germany. The Germans, however, were never intent on training Africans for leadership or for making them good German citizens. The English and French tried—in varying degrees and for varying purposes—to do this. The Europeanising process has therefore penetrated deep in those subjects on which education has been concentrated successfully; but 'negritude' has not been completely overwhelmed. It is this negritude or 'Africanhood' which gives the West African his confidence and his desire for independence instead of assimilation.

Denis Osadebay writes:

> *"Let me play with the whiteman's ways*
> *Let me work with the blackman's brains*
> *Let my affairs themselves sort out*
> *Then in sweet rebirth I'll rise a better man*
> *Not ashamed to face the world."*

The stronger and more embracing influence of French culture —though concentrated only on a few—has led those Africans

affected by it to be more French in thought, than, say, an Ashanti is British. By the same process however, it has produced a greater reaction against the imperial power. The result is that French West African poetry is more fluent but more violent. It has made Africans emphasise and praise those features which make them different from the French, for fear of losing their emotional and physical identity. Senghor, the great Senegalese poet and politician, writes in his poem 'Femme Noire',

"Femme nue, femme obscure
. . . . Sombre extase de vin noir"

—Naked black woman . . .
Dark ecstasy of black wine

and Mandessi (D. Diop) in 'Rama Kam',

"Ton corps est le piment noir
qui fait chanter le désir . . ."

—Thy body is the black spice
which makes desire sing

both emphasising the desirable nature of the black skin. It is irrelevant that Mme. Senghor is white, because when Africans talk of white people critically they usually and unconsciously exclude the ones they love.

The valuable aspects of French colonial policy can easily be overlooked. France has often given of her best to the intelligentsia of her colonies. If anything, she has tried to give too much and to make the chosen over in her image. The resistance this civilising mission has engendered shows itself again acutely in David Diop's poems, for example in 'Celni qui a tout perdu', translated by Miss Margaret Peatman in Dr. Bassir's useful anthology:

—My women were beautiful
Swaying like palms in the evening breeze.
My children swam in the wide deep river . . .
. . . Then one day. Silence . . .
No sun shone on my empty cabin;
My women pressed their lips
To the hard thin lips of the cold-eyed conquerors
And my children put off peaceful nudity
For uniforms of steel and blood. . . .

All West African poetry is not the poetry of protest, however. The River Senegal has its Left Bank, and on this the poet sings

to his ancestral spirits who are ever present, surrounding him. Birago Diop writes:

"*Ecoute plus souvent*
les choses que les êtres
La voix du feu s'entend,
entends la voix de l'eau
écoute dans le vent
le buisson en sanglots.
C'est le souffle des ancêtres."

which I translate:

—*Listen more often*
To things than beings:
Hear the voice of fire;
Hear the voice of water;
The sobbing of the trees in the wind
Is the breath of our forefathers.

It is generally true, however, that the black French poet regards it as his duty to be committed. Jacques Rabemananjara, the Malagasi leader and poet, is emphatic on this, and strongly feels that poets and writers should be in the forefront of the struggle against colonialism and prejudice. It is not without significance that most of the leading coloured French poets, like Rabemananjara himself, Leopold Senghor from Senegal, and Aimé Césaire from Martinique, are politicians. A Congress for Negro writers was postponed in 1958 because the French delegations had to return to their respective homes in order to campaign for the de Gaulle referendum.

* * *

Poetry by West Africans from British territories has a longer history, because the early European settlements were mostly on what is now English-language territory. Thus from Ghana, about two centuries ago, Capitein was writing Latin verse in Europe. Ignatius Sancho in England and Phyllis Wheatley in America were other outstanding examples of West Africans who were known in their day for their poetry. This was poetry which did not derive much from Africa, however, as these writers had been removed quite early from their childhood surroundings.

The British at one time tried rather half-heartedly to draw the educated African completely from his background. A combination of some wisdom, some malaria and a little lethargy

fortunately put a stop to the attempt. Because of this perhaps, the reaction of the British West African is not so violent against the colonising power. But some violence is there. Crispin George, in 'How Long, Lord', writes:

> *"Why so much misery in this mundane sphere,*
> *Such wretchedness and so much cause for fear!*
> . . . . . .
> *Shall man deprive his kind of Nature's dower*
> *To satisfy unblest and transient power."*

Denis Osadebay echoes these sentiments in what a West African might be tempted to call plainer English in 'Blackman's Trouble'.

> *"I no get gun, I no get bomb,*
> *I no fit fight no more;*
> *You bring your cross and make me dumb,*
> *My heart get plenty sore.*
> *You tell me close my eyes and pray*
> *Your brudder thief my land away."*

But fortunately he has given him his land back in West Africa, and now, robbed of the major impetus in Negro writing, the poet sings of more personal and traditional things. Even the issue of racial intermarriage, raised by Efua Morgue, the Ghanian woman poet, in 'It happened', is not so urgent.

> *"We saw not ourselves in tints*
> *We only knew that we were there*
> *Making a song and a garden.*
> *Know you, races of earth,*
> *Two of your colours met*
> *And gave each other all*
> *As earth reeled blindly past".*

The voice of protest in British West African poets is often mixed with nostalgia and is written by expatriate Africans in Europe like the late Dr. R. G. Armattoe, the well-known Ghanaian man of letters. On his return to Ghana, however, Armattoe suffered much disappointment, and his poems became very bitter.

Another aspect of writing in the four West African territories is the way in which it has been influenced not so much by wide reading in English literature, as by the setbooks of poetry in the school-leaving certificate examinations. The 'Anthology of Modern Verse', Palgrave's 'Golden Treasury', and 'Church

Hymnals' are all creditors to West African poetry. Yet this does not always detract from the quality of the verse. It gives West African poetry an archaic ring, but sometimes endows it with a strange power. And when poetry is written about things African, spontaneity breaks through. Kwesi Brew writes in 'The Woods decay',

> "*O there are flowers in Tamale*
> *That smell like fire*
> *The Harmattan winds twiddle and toss them*
> *But they never blink a colour.*
> *I see the cross on the hill*
> *And your hair scattered on the grass.*"

* * *

The poetess in West Africa is a rare figure. This reflects the state of women's education, which until recently—apart from a few areas like Freetown, Cape Coast and Lagos—has always been seriously behind that of men. The few women poets usually come from educated families and are themselves usually outstanding in more than one respect. There was Gladys Casely Hayford from Sierra Leone and Ghana, who was educated in England and taught at her mother's school in Freetown. From Ghana there are Efua Sutherland (née Morgue), a teacher, with a rich haunting imagery, and Joyce Addo, a broadcasting official. Nigeria has Mabel Imoukhede, a graduate of Ibadan University College, whose poems sometimes show intense introspection. The woman poets write about love—love of country, of persons and of self.

* * *

Midway between personal poetry and traditional verse is the epic ballad. This is invaluable, as it is the product of the poet's imagination acting upon known country and known customs. Or it may be based on folklore which the poet develops. It is this field that Adé Babalola has successfully developed with Yoruba folklore in Western Nigeria. His work is not a translation of folk poems. He has used them as basis for his verse, incorporating explanations for the non-Yoruba reader, and packing into concise writing the usual diffuse rendition of folk-tales. There are descriptive pieces of Village Characters like Beauty, Kindness, a Genuine Gentleman, and the Trouble-Lover.

Of this last-named, he writes:

"He is fond of marrying wives of other men . . .
For instance, he once married Shango's wife,
That is, the God of Thunder's spouse,
But in his house she made him ill at ease
By belching fire from her mouth whene'er she spoke."

The middle line is explanatory, the rest being the product of the poet's background of Yoruba mythology and the Cambridge Tripos.

* * *

Translations of traditional poetry have great appeal. First, for those who completely understand the background and meaning; and secondly, for outsiders who can sense their rhythm and vigour. Naturally, the second class of reader will be in the vast majority; the first will have access to the poem in its original language. Let us content ourselves with treating this class of poetry as non-indigenous readers who may be of any race. Some patience is needed to do this because names of places and characters appear repeatedly, usually without explanation, since they will all be known to the tribal audience.

Traditional poetry was entirely oral until the past fifty years. Poems usually recount royal and religious history and customs. On special occasions these may be recited at great length. There are also poems which are recited or sung on special occasions, such as harvest time, funerals and while marching to war. They are couched in the form of prayers for the task in hand.

The Kru fisherman from Liberia may recite to his gods while at work, pleading that they should keep his eye wakeful, his hands quick, and his strength supple, that he may catch fish for his people to eat; this fishing net that he has woven with a cunning granted him by the gods, he prays will be kept untangled even in the middle of the swaying water-weeds.

Before the Mende professional musicians in Sierra Leone begin their story (Yomeh) to a chief and his warriors, they recite an introduction. *"I know the Yomeh, as a woman lover knows the night; as an alligator knows the river; as a guinea fowl knows the bush . . . as the deer knows the forest."* Then the story begins.

The dominant aspect of traditional verse is rhythm. This rhythm is notably present in the individual writing of French African poets, as Professor Guberina has shown. The beat of traditional verse may follow that of the drum, the xylophone

or the stringed instrument. The most fascinating aspect of drum rhythm is its attribute as a vehicle for the language of the talking drums. Without understanding a single word of Yoruba, the rhythm and sound of the drums impress themselves in this poem, quoted by Lasebikan:

"Jó báta—bata o gb'ônà àbàtà
Jó báta—bata o gb'ônà àbàtà
Ojó báta—bàta
Ojó báta—bàta
Opa b'ó ti mo jó lailai."

It can be freely translated:

—If you dance with irregular steps
You will end up in the marsh
If you persist in dancing in this irregular manner
You will never be a good dancer.

The place of the drummer is an important one in most African societies. Apart from the prosaic duties of announcing deaths and declaring war, the drums recite the nation's proverbs and poetry. Such poetry follows certain traditional patterns. First the drummer announces himself and then rouses the different parts of the drum, like the skin and the drumstick, humouring them in turn with humility.

"I'm learning," he beats, "Help me to succeed."

Then one by one, playing his lonely drums before dawn on the morning of the Adae festival, he addresses the various deities and officials—the Earth, God, the cock, the witch, the court crier, the executioner, all past drummers, and the god Tano. For example, to the Witch, the drummer beats pleadingly in Ikan,

Condolences to you, plunderous witch
Ampene Adu and Ampena Adu Oseewaa
It was Ntikorakora that killed the defenceless one.
Do not kill me sir, do not kill me madam
That I may laud your name on the drums
early in the morning. . . .

The chief and people in their huts wake from sleep and listen with the pleasure and understanding with which, for example, Western Christians would listen to carols on Christmas morning.

In drummed traditional poetry, as quoted above, lines are repeated twice or more, probably for certainty in being understood, to give the drummer time to get ready for the next phrase, or for metrical and musical emphasis. This has undoubtedly had

its effect on current poetry.

* * *

One of the fascinating aspects of nonsense verse in West Africa is the swift and spontaneous way in which it is sometimes composed. I remember the poem which was fitted onto Reville for me one morning by a Creole relation in Kaduna.

King say we nor for kill condo
We nor for kill condo
We nor for kill condo
Bram! Bram!
Arata cobah po.

The king proclaims
Never to kill lizards (repeat)
Bram! Bram!
The mouse covers his chamber-pot.

Then there are the poems introduced into folk tales when the principal character sings, either because he wants to or because he has been turned temporarily into a bird. Others are swiftly made up to praise or derogate some personage or event. This spontaneous versifying in the West African background has found its way to the West Indies and United States through Negro settlers.

* * *

The future of individual poetry in West Africa is a considerable one. With the increase of literacy in and mastery of English and French, words will become sharpened instruments; the technique and skill of use will be increased and the chances of originality and finish in the product accordingly made greater. It is necessary for poets to receive encouragement by publication, appreciation, criticism and financial reward.

As one would expect, Negro poetry sings first of the fight against injustice and oppression. As the battles are won, one by one, it is beginning to sing of the things which surround it: the dark forest, the village changing into town, the self-sacrifice demanded of all, and the black image of the Christian and Moslem god. Soon it will sing more clearly, with the individual voice of the poet searching for his truths and sharing this search with millions all over the world. It may then thank Europe and America for giving it tried and tested languages and insight and thus perhaps be able to forgive them for the agony that this acquisition entailed.

IGHTWATCHMAN FROM ZULULAND

SELBY MVUSI

What hunch-back is this—
mutely guarding a Notre Dame
it does not know?
What monster is this—
with the heart of lambs?
What Adam is this—
lord in a garden of steel?
What manner of Man is this?

From Zululand he comes, a lion long tamed,
fed on the soul of warriors long dead;
Time—uncorrosive—like water on a Hippo's back
seals his fury from the light of day.
An oak tree in the desert parched and bare, he sits
conversing with fire and the dark.

With yawn of mouth scaled but firm, he speaks
of generations gone and coming.
Soothed by Bible smeared with blood, he sings
of voices crying in the dark:
with aching heart he smiles on Time and tells
of children yet unborn.

We know this man—
Zarastro's voice of him has told
op'ning fountainhead of justice old.
Stand up! see this warrior gird
o'er silenced storm of self and circumstance:
thus is truth born with virgin poise.

We know this man,
meeting him yesterday, day-after-tomorrow last year
'mid gurgling laughter of new born babes
and bulbous breasts of beauteous maids,
we parted at even-time, when elder men did gather,
encounter told through years of life lived long.

We know this man,
oft in Ntuli's eyes we met,
in craggy hills and knotted trees;
Mahlabatini's sands his imprint bear—
the Black Snake of Zibulus crawling bruised
neath Egypt's blazing sun.

We know this man.
By night, the forest hush of pines
an aspect white does wear,
distant hills resound with his love songs
benumbing to youthful maidens
shy beneath the waning moon.

History—
drawn from inauspicious hours,
counterfeit of Time,
rends night from unsuspecting day,
suddenly the glare reveals scars
on this molested man.

The 'yellow-eyed-cave-cat' leers,
christened babes, sired off
Agamemnon's breed, take to flight,
the withering bushmen stare the sun out,
emptiness unheard, unseen—but not unknown,
sits with this merchandised man.

Calloused eyes gleam with awe
a spectred Hiroshima they saw.
Oblivion sprawls unseemly
around the city's rim; sterile ornament—
a mock on this wretched man
flouts reason, love and honour.

Children of our fathers walk not
the path we tread. Lest in sleep
you dream things vile and mean, Go home!
leave us here to talk and drink with men
who fought and died at Weenenspruit
when Time and men were indiscreet.

Imprisoned destiny,
in shifting time revealed,
change—changing not—nor error
will amend, but potent hour present
incisive of the time; deride not searching mind
with peasant heaviness weighed down.

Never was battle fought twixt spear
and saracen tank—honour is defended
when men on men do feed. Seeking
not to justify, but to see, seeing
perhaps to understand, respond and create
of Africa's being in new semblance seen;

in others bound, we to ours are lost.
Our fury blights the soul. The mind—
parasitic, feeds the will and marks the 'arrogant wake'.
Being what we know, knowing not what we be,
how just is justice true?
Does truth of beauty speak?

Most secret visage—life in Time abounding,
soothe not the heart, quickening not the mind.
Mountains echo hoarse requiescat voices
valleys groan with gutteral moaning:
we gasp from thirst eternal
for balm of this hour.

We know the Man. At dusk
the land of Him does speak—
a fine fellow, they say. We agree. Yes, we agree.
(Is he dead? No.) Inject him, we did.
Street sweepers have been here
this place looks clean.

We weep not for sadness, but joy
made sad by clammy hand of colossi invincible;
Galileo's world made square in mind hectagonal
paradise bleached
by anti-cosmic men—a world
iron-clanged in Time immeasurable.

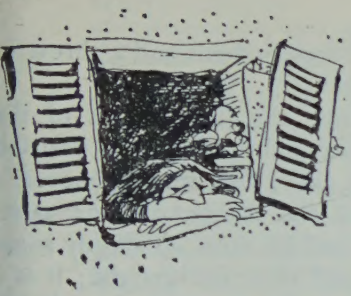
Would that we could
with deictic violence short-circuit
this current of triviality, with David's lyre touch
the Sauls of today. In aspect pure
our love then would stand,
this woman—all women, this child—all youths;

loving, guarding and building
before and after their form,
a myriad faces lo! would sparkle
bright with hope—the health and wealth
of youthful clans, gay with song,
choralling love in Zululand.

Alas! we are blind,
either too young or too old
too uncommitted, too long wed to words,
too concerned with meaning to have meaning.
Forlorn, we stand apart,
impotent, we disdain.

Watchman speak
the sun does languish in the East!
" Come sit with me and learn
of fire reduced to ashes.
Come, sit with me and taste
of scalding water on parched tongue:
Come, sit with me and see
night shivering in awe of the on-coming dawn.
Come, Come—sit with me.

The children of our land
charged of me to tell,
I told them I did not know.
They asked me why?
I told them I was not to know.
They asked me what for?
I told them I am not to know.
But this—to all—I do tell,
Forward—we must move
With Truth of This Day."



BOOK REVIEWS

The Tragedy of Apartheid by Norman Phillips.
Published by Allen & Unwin, London. 18s.

Apartheid and Discrimination by K. L. Roskam.
Published by A. W. Sythoff, Leyden, Netherlands. 21s.

The African Revolution by James Cameron.
Published by Thames & Hudson, London. 18s.

DR. VERWOERD has always wanted to make a monkey of the press: one that saw no evil, heard no evil, spoke no evil and reported no evil. It's an old nervous tic of all tyrants, and during the South African Emergency last year, he, his ministers and hard-working police, must have felt that they were succeeding, with the local press anyway. Police, army and, for some reason, the navy, surrounded the strike-bound African township of Nyanga near Cape Town, for instance, and thus thought that they prevented the press from seeing their evil goings-on there; they eventually cut the telephone communications from the township; they hounded, intimidated or arrested anyone from Nyanga who managed to speak to the press; and they passed Emergency Regulations arbitrarily preventing the press from publishing anything that might cause "unrest". The local South African press, choking uneasily on its gag, published police or official hand-outs almost entirely.

The officials were dismayed, then, to see the uncowed corps of foreign correspondents, busily searching everywhere for facts, and considering themselves free of the ferocious restrictions placed on the local press. An official of the State Information Office said picturesquely, "There is a leakage of news overseas. By public request this will be dealt with."

Shortly afterwards, Norman Phillips, foreign news editor of the Canadian '*Toronto Star*', was arrested, without charge or trial; imprisoned for three days and then hastily deported. In his recently published book, he sums up, accurately I think,

the main reasons for his arrest:

"1. A warning to all foreign correspondents and a threat to their sources of information.

"2. A vindictive action revealing the jittery state of the white-supremacy Government and the dominant position of its (then) national police chief, General Rademeyer."

His book is a racy account of the Sharpeville and post-Sharpeville police orgy of terror, and he sums up simply some of the major discriminatory laws and their background; it is a pity—but probably inevitable—that a few minor errors should escape his sharp sub-editor's eye, and it is deplorable that his publishers should slackly sub-title his account: "A Journalist's Experiences in the South African Riots". Which riots? However, it is a sturdy indictment of apartheid which, I hope, will fulfill his jailers' worst fears by reaching hitherto uninformed millions.

Mr. Roskam's book is a more scholarly document, and one of the most valuable up-to-date reference books on South Africa. It is packed with jewels of verbatim quotes, which will have great historical value:

The African may only reside in towns "when he is willing to enter and minister to the needs of the white man and should depart therefrom when he ceases to minister". (Stallard Commission, 1922.)

"South Africa is a white man's country and he must remain the master here." (Verwoerd)

The mass of assiduously collected statistics in Mr. Roskam's book is skilfully analysed: in facts and interpretation it is the necessary supplement to Basil Davidson's unsurpassed but almost ten-year-old '*Report on Southern Africa*'.

James Cameron's book will taste like a fresh, clear river to anyone struggling through the sandy wastes of contradictory "Western" versions of African changes: that is, revolutionary upheavals throughout Africa. He is incomparable, this writer/reporter, in presenting the most turgid situation in the cleanest and most lilting language. He modestly suggests himself that "purists, specialists and Old Hands" will quarrel with some of his simplifications. It is a beautiful book to quarrel with, though. His book is part of a sort of literary Promised Land: an exciting series on all (his publisher's word) the major social and political upheavals of mankind which can be regarded as turning points in human progress.

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